

## **YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING IMPROVE LEADERSHIP SKILLS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Youth is the largest group in the structure of society in our country. This clearly shows that youth are a valuable asset of the nation. Therefore, these youths need to be nurtured and mentored so that they can become a proud generation. This article examines the participation of youth in decision making indirectly producing leadership skills in a person's youth. To clarify the existing relationships between youth participation in decision-making will improve leadership skills. Past research studies, articles and books on related fields have been referred to support the discussion. Conclusions have been discussed to cover the gaps.

**Keywords:** Youth, Decision making, leadership skill

### **INTRODUCTION**

Every day, questions involving youths are a serious topic of discussion and require a high level of concern by all relevant parties. This is because youths are the heir to the leadership and glory of the nation in the future. In addition, youths can play an enormous role and responsibility for religion, society, nation and nation to generate sustainable economic growth and prosperity.

The Statistics Department of Malaysia recorded that in 2010 was 11.65 million (40.2%). In 2013, the number of youths was 13.73 million. Meanwhile, in 2015, there were 13.88 million people representing 45.8% of the 30.26 million Malaysians. A high percentage of youth shows that youth are the key asset in determining the direction and success of the nation by 2020.

Youths are individuals who will inherit the future leadership of the country. Therefore, one of the main agenda in a country is the development and development of a person's identity. Thus, the youths should be responsible for the current and future direction of the country (Sarjit & Wan

Ahmad, 2008; Abdullah Badawi, 2006). Nevertheless, youth are not only responsible for learning to the ivory tower, building a great career or doing activities for leisure but youth should be together with the government to contribute ideas, time and energy towards youth development (Nik Safiah, Selamah & Norazlina, 2015).

Leadership ability is one of the important aspects of society formation. Therefore, healthy leadership will lead to the strengthening of unity among the races, avoiding conflicts and becoming a catalyst for the people in a country moving towards the same goal (Alimuddin, 2011; Jamaludin, Mazila & Aminuddin, 2011).

A country is seen as successful, viable and respected because of its high leadership (Lussier & Achua, 2007; Victor & Andersson, 2012). In addition, Robinson (2009), states that a good leader can influence his members to participate in planned activities. In addition, it is able to create good interactions with members, and there is a sense of respect, anxiety and the spirit of cooperation among members.

In addition, the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (2010) said there were limited opportunities for youth to engage in decision-making. Therefore, youth feel themselves excluded and marginalized in society and in the community. This statement is supported by Fleming's (2012) study that there is too much adult control in the process of participation in activities involving youth. Young people are disappointed about the rate of change and the lack of accountability and feedback from adults. Therefore, this study will examine the existing relationships between youth participation in decision-making and leadership skills. The focus of the study is more on looking at the youth involved in the association.

## **YOUTH**

Youth is a stage of development in the life of an individual. Therefore, youth is as a transition period from the dependence of childhood into adulthood. In Malaysia, youths are defined as individuals aged between 15 and 30 years old. The new youth age definition will be implemented 2018 to provide ample time for training and transitions of the new leadership and process of amending the Youth Societies and Youth Development Act 2007 (Act 668).

The United Nations defines youth aged between 15 and 24 years (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2006) and the Commonwealth Organization states that youth are those between the ages of 15 and 29 (Commonwealth Youth Program, Strategic Plan , 2003-2006).

Definition of youth is varied according to country (Youth Policy Formulation Manual, United Nation 1999). Table 1 below shows the difference in youth definition as follows:

**Table 1: Define Youth by Country**

No.	No. Country of youth	Age of youth
1.	Malaysia	15-30
2.	Brunei	15-25
3.	Vietnam	15-35
4.	Philippines	15-30
5.	Singapore	15-29
6.	Thailand	15-24
7.	China	15-28
8.	India	13-35
9.	Australia	15-25
10.	New Zealand	15-24

Source: Youth Policy Formulation Manual, United Nation 1999

Based on Table 1 above, youth age varies, Malaysia's youth are aged (15-30 years), Brunei and Australia are the same age group of youth is 15-25 years old. Thailand and New Zealand also share the same youth definition (15-24 years), Singapore (15-29 years old), Youth Policy Formulation Manual, United Nation, 1999).

Therefore, it is concluded that the definition of many countries is mostly not less than 35 years old. The emerging global developments have had an impact on the lives of the youth. Therefore, there are initiatives, young people to begin to engage in associations, especially activity planning and participate in decision making (World Youth Report, 2003).

### **YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING**

Youth participation is a decision-sharing process that will affect the life of a person and the life of the community (Hart, 1992). Farthing (2012) defines youth participation as a process where young people, as active societies, participate and give insights and have the power to decide on issues that affect them. Therefore, youth participation will lead to better results and better results.

Decision making also means a process of making choices to existing alternatives. Skills are considered to be one of the most effective ways to make a decision that can be achieved. This is because, skills can identify possible options, identify possible consequences of choice, evaluate one of its consequences and make final choices using a decision rule (Furby & Beyth-

Marom, 1992).

Youth participation indirectly restricts adults, the government abuses their power over the youth, does not act in the interests of the youth as well as the interests of the young are often neglected, especially in public policy. However, there are many benefits when youth engage in decision-making that leads to better results and results, protecting the youth, promoting well-being and youth development and one of which is developing leadership skills and enhancing high confidence. Therefore, youth participation in decision-making provides a good interest and benefit (World Youth Report, 2003; Alexander, 2008; Australian Infant, Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health Association, 2008).

### **LEADERSHIP SKILLS**

Leadership is defined as the process of influencing leaders and followers to achieve an objective through change. In addition, leadership can be defined with some intentions. Certo (2002) leadership is a process of directing other people's behavior in solving one objective.

Leadership skills are defined as tools, behaviors, capabilities that one needs to be more motivated and able to give direction to others (Training, 2010). Therefore, leadership skills need to be in the person of a youth. This is because the youth need to have clear short-term and long-term planning, promoting critical thinking and unconscious thinking, do not practice favoritism and bias in carrying out a decision-making, not letting status differences become a barrier or impair a decision-making process to be achieved. In addition, leadership skills should also involve aspects of memory memorization, capable of describing what is said, open-minded, forgiving, and performing every job with confidence (Nik Safiah, Selamah, Norazlina, 2015).

Omardin (1999) states that leadership skills are like skills to describe, practice and control behaviors, understand problem skills and help find solutions, listening, paying attention, explaining, reflecting, confronting, interpreting, giving information, formulation and relationships human. It is therefore important that leadership skills exist in the youth involved in the association.

### **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS**

There are many studies that show relationship between youth participation in decision-making will improve leadership skills. Thus, it will make strong relationship between one another.

According to Campbell and Erbsstein (2012) the high level of participation in decision making of

the association has resulted in the development of capacity in establishing clear relationships and interactions between adults and youths and peers. Youth participation in the association indirectly creates skills in public speaking, planning and execution of meetings, creating high confidence in civic responsibility, knowledge of the local system and policy change strategy.

Meanwhile, community-based youth research also encourages youth active participation in decision-making to enhance self-confidence, facilitate critical thinking, and enhance social skills, and teamwork, teamwork and commitment to serve (Scheve, Perkins, Mincemoyer & Walsh, 2006). Thus, Benson, Scales, Hamilton and Sesma (2006) believe that youth are able to influence society and create positive development when they are given opportunities to influence a decision.

Supported by Zeldin (2004) statement which discusses the participation of young people in decision-making will encourage positive youth development and increase the effectiveness of leadership skills. In addition, youth participation in decision-making creates social justice towards youth representation, promoting youth development and community development. The findings show that when youths and adults share responsibilities then a decision can be made.

In contrast to the study conducted by Wan Ahmad Amir Zal, Ma'rof Redzuan and Abdul Halim Sidek (2010), his studies show that Bario youth participation in community development activities is low. The barrier is that older generations are more restrictive of youth participation in community activities. Internal problems such as lacking in specific skills in the organization's success in the community have a strong desire to sustain the community.

Besides that, Khairunesa and Mohamed Azrul Syam (2011) find that moderate levels in all four categories of activities are planning stage, implementation, and evaluation and sharing of benefits. However, participation in an organization can give opportunities for youth to get information and interact with other individuals.

However, Flanagan and Christens (2011) point out that more youths are given the opportunity to participate and contribute in associations or beneficial activities will create more relationships with the community and the enhancement of Youth leadership skills involved in the decision will enable a decision to be made relevant and does not harm the youth (Khairunesa & Mohamed Azrul Syam, 2011) Thus, there is a connection between youth participation in decision-making and leadership skills of Campbell and Erbstein, 2012; Scheve, Perkins, Mincemoyer & Walsh, 2006).

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, efforts to attract youth to engage in activities that are carried out and empowering youth through decision-making on youth development programs or activities organized by youth associations can indirectly create quality, credible, moral and moral values of youth which elevates the roles and participation of youth in society and future development in the future. The supervisor should act as an agent capable of guiding the community towards goodness and well-being. In addition, youths need guidance from older adults. Therefore, the government should develop and inculcate the quality of leadership among youth through courses and exercises conducted on pure values and positive attitudes. Special course on value will also be conducted to form youth as a citizen of leadership and be an example in society. More awareness of the importance of the role of youth in nurturing and encouraging leadership spirit should be given priority in leadership training programs. Overall, this study is expected to help all parties involved to involve the youth in a decision especially in the association. Youth participation in decision making can create leadership skills in the youth. This is indirectly, the youth is free from the problem of moral collapse and together develop a glorious nation and achieve Vision 2020 (Nor Hanim, Selamah & Ahmad Bashir, 2015). In addition, today's youth will be coming is the heir of the state leadership and the development of a country. Youth is an important asset in the process of building a nation of high-level leaders. Therefore, it is hoped that the youth generation in Malaysia will be seen as a more mature generation and ready to produce high-skilled youth in the leadership of the association, NGOs in turn to inherit the leadership of the nation at a younger age.

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