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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE QUALITY OF ENGLISH TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS AT MALAYSIAN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS: HOW IS QUALITY ACHIEVED

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ABSTRACT

In response to the growing competition among Malaysian tertiary institutions to enrol students, education quality has become a key concern. The quality of English teacher education is critical and is a focus of the English Language Teaching profession. The current study was undertaken to explore the quality of English teacher education by measuring the indicators of four forms of capital (intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social) as determinants of quality. Sixty-nine heads and lecturers of English teacher education programs at five Malaysian major public tertiary institutions participated in the study; they completed questionnaires containing forty indicators of 'self-assessment'. The findings indicated the highest and lowest indicators of each of the four forms of capital. Additionally, some significant positive correlations were reported among the four forms of capital. These results demonstrated that academic staff should continuously change, adapt, and learn to not get left behind. Most importantly, executives in English teacher education programs at Malaysian public tertiary institutions should lead, rather than follow, in the development of quality programs.

Keywords: Quality, Intellectual capital, Financial capital, Spiritual capital, Social capital, Malaysian tertiary institutions.

Contribution/ Originality

This study enriches the empirical work conducted in the teacher education field in general and English language teacher education in particular. It is one of very few studies that fill the void in literature regarding the highest and lowest indicators of the determinants of quality English language teacher education programs.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching is a noble profession, and quality teachers are highly esteemed members of the community. Research on English teacher education is important in itself, especially because today's world has entered into an era of globalisation, which includes education (Beaumont, 2004; Wardman, 2009). Changes in the way education is delivered, such as the prevalence of online education versus face-to-face delivery, the characteristics of students, and the structure of educational organisations, have emphasised the importance of quality as a basic characteristic of educational practices.

English teacher education as an ELT area has not been adequately researched (Wardman, 2009). According to the Malaysian English Language Teachers' Association's (MELTA) official website, exploring the quality of pre-service English teacher education has not been the focus of scholars. This study aims to fill that void by exploring the quality of English teacher education programs, specifically by assessing the indicators of four forms of capital (intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social) as determinants of quality; this topic has not been researched before, either locally or internationally, and quality has recently become a particular focus of the ELT profession (Loyet, 2010). The current study attempts to answer two questions: 1) What are the highest and lowest indicators of the four forms of capital (intellectual, financial, social, and spiritual capital) in pre-service English teacher education in terms of their importance and the performance of key stakeholders? 2) Are there any significant relationships among the four forms of capital in pre-service English teacher education by key stakeholders?

Addressing these questions may assist the Malaysian government in realising its objective of turning the country into an educational leader in the region. A review of the literature, related to the importance of quality pre-service English teacher education with regard to the four forms of capital, is provided in the following section. Then, descriptions of the study's participants, the research design and the techniques used in collecting and analysing the data are entailed. The findings are presented in two subsections, followed by a discussion. Finally, a conclusion to the entire study is provided along with recommendations for future research.

1.1. The Importance of Quality English Teacher Education in Malaysia

In Malaysia, the quality of the teaching profession is considered a key element in accomplishing the country's educational objectives, and teachers perform an essential task in addressing the impacts and challenges of globalisation encountered by the country (Mokshein *et al.*, 2009). Hence, developing human capital and improving the quality of education are important educational aims in Malaysia. This priority is clearly observed in the steps that the Malaysian government has taken to enhance the quality of teachers, such as by employing highly qualified people and improving the remuneration system of the teaching profession (Jamil *et al.*, 2010). Not surprisingly, social scientists and educators are well aware of the importance of English and agree that students should learn English to excel in their lives. Hence, the benefits of improving the quality of English teacher education are applicable to the entire society.

However, there is a shortage of research on English teacher education (Crookes, 2003; Beaumont, 2004; Wardman, 2009) and the quality of English teacher education, in particular.

Chapman (2009) noted that the Malaysian nation's Vision 2020 aims to push the country to become knowledge-based, shifting into an entirely developed nation (Kamogawa, 2003). Nunan (2003) attempted to study the effectiveness of the use of the English language in educational policies and practices in some Asian-Pacific countries, including Malaysia. However, the recent literature lacks accessible studies on the quality of English teacher education at the tertiary level.

The substantial influence that a quality teacher has is accentuated by Barber and Mourshed (2007), which describes a quality teacher as the chief driving force capable of making changes and transformation. Indeed, this is apparent in the statement '*the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers*'. Caldwell and Harris (2008) identify certain indicators measuring the quality of any education system by assessing four forms of capital (intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social) as determinants of quality. It is crucially important to align the four forms of capital to ensure that schools improve and accomplish their quality goals (Caldwell, 2008; Harris, 2010a).

1.2. Intellectual Capital

The term intellectual capital is utilised to comprise the '*knowledge and skills of all of those who work in or for*' the school (Caldwell and Harris, 2008). The key theme here is that the quality of the teachers constitutes the chief driving force behind a successful transformation and the improvement of education quality. A nation's intellectual capital assists in revealing and directing the invisible wealth of that nation and is at the root of the development maintenance of a society's wellbeing; as such, all individuals are current and latent sources of wealth creation (Bontis, 2002).

1.3. Financial Capital

The notion of financial capital represents all funds, resources and facilities accessible to the school system (Jamil *et al.*, 2010; Harris, 2010a; Issa *et al.*, 2013). Money is important, and high levels of financial capital are necessary to accomplish the transformation. Caldwell and Harris (2008) assert that financial capital is only one form of capital that ought to be aligned alongside intellectual, social and spiritual capital. Thus, there is a strong relation among the four forms of capital. Apparently, if a school cannot provide sufficient funds to train its staff and ensure that they are at the forefront of knowledge and skills (via continuing professional development), the intellectual capital cannot be strengthened. Not only is it important to allocate funds to address the local needs, but schools must also be flexible in their budgets and enjoy levels of financial autonomy, as occurs in the United States; there, responsibility for financial decisions normally lies in the school districts, whilst districts in other places are highly centralised (Zhao *et al.*, 2008). Similarly, the flexibility of financial autonomy in schools varies in the public schools in Australia (Caldwell, 2008).

1.4. Spiritual Capital

Spiritual capital indicates a degree of coherence in terms of shared values, ethics, beliefs and attitudes towards life and learning, as well as the strength of moral purpose in an organisation, such as a school or school system, with those in the wider community (Jamil *et al.*, 2010; Harris, 2010a;

Harris, 2010b). Spiritual capital is considered by Zohar and Marshall (2004) as '*a wealth of meaning and values that can generate profit to be added to the wealth of the human spirit and to general human well-being*'. Spiritual capital is as important as the other forms of capital in attaining the targeted transformation. In educational research, the notion of spiritual capital is quite new (Barber and Mourshed, 2007).

1.5. Social Capital

Caldwell and Harris (2008) utilise the concept of '*social capital*' to indicate the '*strength of formal and informal partnerships and networks involving the school and all individuals, agencies, organisations and institutions that have the potential to support and be supported by the school*' (p. 59). The key theme is the importance of social capital as a source of support for improving other forms of capital in any education system. Hence, social capital is defined as all relationships with all community members who have mutual support for and trust in the educational institution (Caldwell, 2008; Jamil *et al.*, 2010; Harris, 2010b) Several countries have highlighted the vital role that social capital plays in accomplishing prosperity for any institution or organisation, including Australia, England, the US and Finland. This priority is confirmed in the findings of an international project that was carried out in six countries (Caldwell, 2008; Caldwell and Harris, 2008; Caldwell and Spinks, 2008; Caldwell, 2009), which is now being replicated in four other countries from the Asia-Pacific region, including Malaysia (Jamil *et al.*, 2010; Harris, 2010b; Issa *et al.*, 2013).

Social capital lies in three broad categories: relationships with parents and other members of the community, networks with other knowledge bodies, and links with business agencies (Harris, 2010a). Collaborative networks represent vital facets of the aspects of education that ensure the education of well-prepared and productive students. These networks can be international, creating links with educational organisations in different countries for the purpose of sharing knowledge and skills (Caldwell, 2006; Caldwell and Harris, 2008). In addition, networks can be inter-institutional collaborations that benefit staff via professional development and training, exchanging ideas and expertise, and improving the motivation and confidence of staff (Caldwell, 2008). The third category of social capital is founding partnerships with businesses, agencies and organisations. A good example is the links between specialist schools in England and specialised organisations providing practical support, knowledge and financial support (Goodfellow and Walton, 2008).

1.6. Research Design, Participants, Data Collection and Analysis

A 'self-assessment' questionnaire was completed by 69 English language heads and lecturers from English teacher education programs at five major public Malaysian universities. The respondents were selected by addressing all of the academic English teacher education staff at those 5 Malaysian tertiary institutions (Sekaran, 2009). The 'self-assessment' questionnaire was set and validated to frame the transformation of schools for the international project from 2004 to 2008 by Professor Brian Caldwell and Doctors Jim Spinks and Jessica Harris (Caldwell and Harris, 2008; Caldwell and Spinks, 2008). This instrument identified ten sample indicators for each of the

four forms of capital. Harris (2010a) noted that these sample indicators provided researchers with a framework to carefully measure the four forms of capital, serving as a guide for researchers to assess the determinants of quality (i.e., the four forms of capital) for any educational institution. Table 1. Below illustrates the questionnaires distribution and the actual participants.

Table-1. Questionnaires and Respondents

Distributed Questionnaires	Collected Questionnaires	Rejected/Incomplete Questionnaires	Complete Questionnaires
88	74	5	69

For the purpose of this study, validity and reliability of the 'self-assessment' questionnaire's items were sought. In terms of validity, a letter was submitted to some experts with a validity report; these experts indicated the degree of appropriateness of statements on the questionnaire to obtain the data required for this study. Additionally, the questionnaire's items were pilot tested before the actual collection of data using 50 subjects who had similar characteristics to the study's actual subjects to determine the Cronbach's Alpha level and examine the reliability coefficient (Pallant, 2007). The results indicated an overall reliability of 0.97 for the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, which is considered ideal (Nunnally, 1978; Pallant, 2005). Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyse the collected data utilising the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 (Pallant, 2011).

2. FINDINGS

The findings are detailed under two headings as follows:

- The highest and lowest indicators of the four forms of capital
- Positive and significant relationships among the four forms of capital

2.1. The Highest and Lowest Indicators of the Four Forms of Capital

Determining the highest and lowest indicators for the four forms of capital in terms of importance and performance becomes possible by employing descriptive statistics and displaying the mean scores and standard deviations of the 10 indicators for each of the four forms of capital. Firstly, regarding the intellectual capital, the mean scores for importance were both close and high (see Table 2). The highest indicator was "*The staff allocated to or selected by the school is at the forefront of knowledge and skill in required disciplines and pedagogies"*, with a mean score of 4.46 and a standard deviation of 0.78, whilst the lowest indicator was *"When necessary, the school outsources to augment the professional talents of its staff"*, with a mean score of 3.81 and a standard deviation of 0.92. Regarding performance, the highest indicator was "*The school participates in networks with other schools and individuals, organisations, institutions and agencies, in education and other fields to share knowledge, solve problems or pool resources"*, with a mean score of 5.17 and a standard deviation of 6.07, whereas the lowest indicator was the same as the lowest indicator of importance "*When necessary, the school outsources to augment the professional talents of its staff"*, with a mean score of 3.20 and a standard deviation of 1.12.

Table-2. Descriptive Statistics of the Intellectual Capital

Sample Indicator	Importance		Performance	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. The staff allocated to or selected by the school is at the forefront of knowledge and skill in required disciplines and pedagogies.	4.46	0.78	4.00	0.822
2. The school identifies and implements outstanding practice observed in or reported by other schools.	4.29	0.77	3.61	1.140
3. The school has built a substantial, systematic and sustained capacity for acquiring and sharing professional knowledge.	4.07	0.75	3.77	0.770
4. Outstanding professional practice is recognised and rewarded.	4.30	0.77	3.99	0.947
5. The school supports a comprehensive and coherent plan for the professional development of all staff that reflects its needs and priorities.	4.33	0.80	3.80	1.132
6. When necessary, the school outsources to augment the professional talents of its staff.	3.81	0.92	3.20	1.128
7. The school participates in networks with other schools and individuals, organisations, institutions and agencies, in education and other fields to share knowledge, solve problems or pool resources.	4.35	0.76	5.17	6.071
8. The school ensures that adequate funds are set aside in the budget to support the acquisition and dissemination of professional knowledge.	4.36	0.68	3.64	1.057
9. The school provides opportunities for staff to innovate in their professional practice.	4.28	0.78	3.68	1.10
10. The school supports a 'no-blame' culture which accepts that innovations often fail.	4.10	0.84	3.52	1.11
Overall	4.23	0.64	3.83	1.05

Secondly, Table 3 shows the mean scores and standard deviations of the 10 indicators for financial capital with regard importance and performance. The mean scores for the importance of financial capital were also both close and high. The highest indicator for importance was *Actual expenditure matches intended expenditure allowing for flexibility to meet emerging needs*, with a mean score of 4.33 and a standard deviation of 0.72, whilst the lowest indicator was *"There is appropriate involvement of stakeholders in the planning process"*, with a mean score of 3.90 and a standard deviation of 1.00. The latter was also the lowest indicator of performance, with a mean score of 3.38 and a standard deviation of 1.03, whereas the highest indicator of performance was *"Annual planning occurs in the context of a multi-year development plan for the school"*, with a mean score of 3.78 and a standard deviation of 0.82.

Table-3. Descriptive Statistics of the Financial Capital

Sample Indicator	Importance		Performance	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. Funds are raised from several sources including allocations by formula from the public purse, fees, contributions from the community, and other money rose from the public and private sectors.	4.09	0.81	3.41	1.00
2. Annual planning occurs in the context of a multi-year development plan for the school.	4.16	0.88	3.78	0.82
3. The financial plan has a multi-year outlook as well as an annual budget.	3.97	0.87	3.49	1.08
4. Allocation of funds reflects priorities among educational needs that take account of data on student achievement, evidence-based practice, and targets to be achieved.	4.13	0.84	3.54	1.02
5. There is appropriate involvement of stakeholders in the planning process.	3.90	1.00	3.38	1.03
6. Appropriate accounting procedures are established to monitor and control expenditure.	4.20	0.88	3.65	1.10
7. Money can be transferred from one category of budget to another as needs change or emerge.	4.14	0.84	3.71	0.78
8. Actual expenditure matches intended expenditure allowing for flexibility to meet emerging needs.	4.33	0.72	3.57	0.81
9. Educational targets are consistently achieved through the planned allocation of funds.	4.22	0.70	3.61	1.03
10. The funds from all sources are sufficient and sustainable to meet educational needs.	4.04	0.83	3.75	0.75
Overall	4.11	0.66	3.58	0.73

Thirdly, Table 4 displays the mean scores and standard deviations of the 10 indicators for spiritual capital regarding importance and performance. The highest indicator of both importance and performance was *"There are high levels of trust between the school and members of the community"*, with a mean score for importance of 4.52 and a standard deviation of 0.67 and, for performance, a mean of 3.93 and a standard Deviation of 1.08. Additionally, the lowest indicator for both importance and performance was *"Parents and other stakeholders are active in promoting the values and beliefs of the school"*, with a mean score for importance of 4.00 and a standard Deviation of 1.00 and, for performance, a mean score of 3.43 and a standard Deviation of 1.10. The overall means were 4.30 for spiritual capital importance and 3.70 for performance.

Finally, Table 5 exhibits the mean scores and standard deviations of the 10 indicators of social capital with regard to both importance and performance. In this case, the highest indicator of importance was "*The school draws from and contributes to networks to share knowledge, address*

problems and pool resources", with a mean score of 4.30 and a standard deviation of 1.00. The lowest indicator of importance was "*Parents and other members in the community are advocates of the school and are prepared to take up its cause in challenging circumstances"*, with a mean score of 3.60 and a standard Deviation of 1.10; for performance, this was also the lowest indicator, with a mean score of 3.12 and a standard deviation of 0.85. In terms of performance, the indicators received similar mean scores, and the highest indicator was "*The school draws cash or in-kind support from individuals, organisations, agencies and institutions in the public and private sectors, in education and other fields, including business and industry, philanthropists and social entrepreneurs"*, with a mean score of 3.87 and a standard deviation of 1.10.

Table-4. Descriptive Statistics of the Spiritual Capital

Sample Indicator	Importance		Performance	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. There is a high level of alignment between the values, beliefs and attitudes about life and learning held by the school and members of its community.	4.32	0.65	3.75	0.84
2. The values and beliefs of the school, including where relevant those that derive from a religious foundation, are embedded in its mission, vision, goals, policies, plans and curriculum.	4.43	0.60	3.71	1.03
3. The values and beliefs of the community are taken into account by the school in the formulation of its mission, vision, goals, policies, plans and curriculum.	4.26	0.77	3.71	1.10
4. The school explicitly articulates its values and beliefs in publications and presentations.	4.45	0.70	3.88	0.85
5. Publications and presentations in the wider community reflect an understanding of the values and beliefs of the school.	4.20	0.81	3.81	1.08
6. There are high levels of trust between the school and members of the community.	4.52	0.67	3.93	1.08
7. Parents and other stakeholders are active in promoting the values and beliefs of the school.	4.00	1.00	3.43	1.10
8. The values and beliefs of the school are evident in the actions of students and staff.	4.13	0.85	3.48	0.74
9. Staff and students who are exemplars of the values and beliefs of the school are recognised and rewarded.	4.40	0.87	3.64	1.18
10. The values and beliefs of the school have sustained it or are likely to sustain it in times of crisis.	4.33	0.87	3.67	1.00
Overall	4.30	0.63	3.70	0.74

Table-5. Descriptive Statistics of the Social Capital

Sample Indicator	Importance		Performance	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. There is a high level of alignment between the expectations of parents and other key stakeholders and the mission, vision, goals, policies, plans and programs of the school.	4.13	0.80	3.46	0.88
2. There is extensive and active engagement of parents and others in the community in the educational program of the school.	3.68	1.02	3.20	0.80
3. Parents and others in the community serve on the governing body of the school or contribute in other ways to the decision-making process.	3.81	1.15	3.25	0.77
4. Parents and other members in the community are advocates of the school and are prepared to take up its cause in challenging circumstances.	3.60	1.10	3.12	0.85
5. The school draws cash or in-kind support from individuals, organisations, agencies and institutions in the public and private sectors, in education and other fields, including business and industry, philanthropists and social entrepreneurs.	3.78	1.01	3.87	1.10
6. The school accepts that support from the community has a reciprocal obligation for the school to contribute to the building of the community.	4.26	0.77	3.42	0.62
7. The school draws from and contributes to networks to share knowledge, address problems and pool resources.	4.30	1.00	3.28	1.00
8. Partnerships have been developed and sustained to the extent that each partner gains from the arrangement.	4.20	0.88	3.23	1.08
9. Resources, both financial and human, have been allocated by the school to building partnerships that provide mutual support.	4.25	0.80	3.30	1.00
10. The school is co-located with or located near services in the community and these services are utilised in support of the school.	3.83	1.02	3.10	1.00
Overall	4.03	0.83	3.22	0.82

2.2. Positive and Significant Relationships among the Four Forms of Capital

After fulfilling the assumptions of correlation (scale of measurement, independence of observations, normality, linearity, related pairs, and homoscedasticity), it was safe to perform the Pearson correlation (r) to test the correlations among the four forms of capital.

$H_0$1: There are no significant correlations among the four forms of capital (intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social capital) in English teacher education.

Table 6 illustrates the correlation results that were tested at the 0.01 significance level; the strength of association was considered according to Cohen (1988). Accordingly, strong positive and significant linear associations existed between Intellectual Capital and Financial Capital (r=.634, n=69, *p*=0.00), on the one hand, and Intellectual Capital and Spiritual Capital (r=.737, n=69, *p*=0.00), on the other hand. In addition, Intellectual Capital also had a medium positive association with Social Capital (r=.351, n=69, *p*=0.00). Table 4.19 elucidated the strong positive linear associations that Financial Capital had with both Spiritual Capital (r=.795, n=69, *p*=0.00) and Social Capital (r=.824, n=69, *p*=0.00). Additionally, Spiritual Capital had a strong positive linear association with Social Capital (r=.620, n=69, *p*=0.00).

Given the strength of association, r^2 =.634 showed that 63.4% of the variance in Intellectual Capital was due to a linear relationship with Financial Capital. In addition, r^2 =.737 indicated that 73.7% of the variance in Intellectual Capital was due to a linear relationship with Spiritual Capital, and r^2 =.351 showed that 35.1% of the variance in Intellectual Capital was due to a medium linear relationship with Social Capital (Cohen, 1988). Additionally, r^2 =.795 indicated that 97.5% of the variance in Financial Capital is due to a linear relationship with Spiritual Capital, and r^2 =.824 indicated that 82.4% of the variance in Financial Capital is due to a linear relationship with Social Capital; this was highest association in this table. Finally, r^2 =.620 indicated that 62.0% of the variance in Spiritual Capital was due to a linear relationship with Social Capital. Accordingly, the $H_0$1 hypothesis was rejected, as the *p* values were all 0.00, less than the significance level of 0.01. Thus, it was concluded with 99% confidence that there were positive and significant linear correlations among the four forms of capital (intellectual, financial, social, and spiritual capital) of pre-service English teacher education among key stakeholders.

3. DISCUSSIONS

It was demonstrated that the highest indicator of intellectual capital, in terms of importance, was *"The staff allocated to or selected by the school is at the forefront of knowledge and skill in required disciplines and pedagogies"*. The selection of quality staff with a variety of specialisations is fundamental for the quality of English teacher education programs, as the education of student-teachers depends mainly on the up-to-date knowledge and skills of the lecturers. Most importantly, English teacher education programs should be rich in terms of academic staff with specialties in curriculum development, literature, speaking, reading and other disciplines. Indeed, there is a need to ensure that these areas are diverse so that the program is enriched. This finding echoes the findings of the previous literature. For example, in the

international study by Barber and Mourshed (2007) on high-performing school systems, a wealth of evidence was found on the importance of quality teachers.

Table-6. Correlations (intellectual, Financial, Spiritual, and Social capital)

		Intellectual	Financial	Spiritual	Social
Intellectual	Pearson Correlation	1	.634(**)	.737(**)	.351(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.003
	N	69	69	69	69
Financial	Pearson Correlation	.634(**)	1	.795(**)	.824(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	69	69	69	69
Spiritual	Pearson Correlation	.737(**)	.795(**)	1	.620(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	69	69	69	69
Social	Pearson Correlation	.351(**)	.824(**)	.620(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.000	.000	
	N	69	69	69	69

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data analysis Results.

In terms of performance, the highest indicator of intellectual capital was found to be *"The school participates in networks with other schools and individuals, organisations, institutions and agencies, in education and other fields to share knowledge, solve problems or pool resources"*. Hence, it is essential that schools act as sound platforms to enhance, encourage and celebrate the acquisition of intellectual capital in several forms, whether through regular seminars, conferences, or panel discussions. Additionally, schools should promote networking to share skills and exchange knowledge with the wider community, perhaps via conferences or in-house journals, as a written type of platform in which lecturers can add to or enhance their intellectual capacity. Creating and sustaining this type of working culture and environment is fundamental for quality English teacher education. This finding was in line with the international study by Barber and Mourshed (2007), who noted that empowering teachers to work collaboratively was an approach employed by high-performing schools to aid their teachers in enhancing their professional development; this occurred in the cases of Finland, Japan and China. This finding came in response to the latest MOE plan of the Malaysian Education Development Plan 2013-2025 to enhance education quality in Malaysia (Ministry of Education, 2012).

The lowest indicator of the intellectual capital of pre-service English teacher education programs at major Malaysian tertiary institutions was found to be the same from two perspectives (importance and performance): *"When necessary, the school outsources to augment the professional talents of its staff"*. All of the participating schools and faculties showed a sincere commitment to CPD (continuing professional development) for all of their staff. It is interesting to note that intellectually, English language lecturers are knowledgeable enough for the programs, depending on three key drivers: their academic qualifications, their expertise, and their contributions to the academic body of research and publications. Accordingly, there is a consensus that schools outsource only when there is a need, such as for speeches on a recently raised topic, an

issue in the English language teaching field or how to get a manuscript published in an ISI journal. Yet, this finding was quite surprising because the English language is used as a second language in Malaysia and is not the mother tongue. Accordingly, tertiary institutions offering English teacher education should outsource to increase and enhance the professional skills and talents of their staff.

Furthermore, the highest indicator of financial capital in terms of importance was *"Actual expenditure matches intended expenditure allowing for flexibility to meet emerging needs"*. Hence, flexibility is important in schools' budgets to achieve the targeted aims and emerging needs. A key issue is having the financial autonomy to allocate money to certain budget categories to address academic needs. This finding concurs with some previous studies suggesting that autonomous schools achieve high performance compared to less autonomous schools, as in the results of studies by Fuchs and Wossmann (2007) and the PISA 2006 by Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (2007). In addition, Caldwell (2008) reported the importance of financial flexibility in meeting local needs. This finding emphasises the importance of financial sustainability to ensure sustainable development. There must be good investments to acquire all of the available funds to generate money that can be used for CPD. The best way to do that is to set some money aside to be used when there is an emerging need. Not surprisingly, the finding regarding financial flexibility was in line with a related report by Barber and Mourshed (2007) which noted an important key issue, namely, that expenditure cannot exceed income.

The second highest indicator of financial capital in terms of performance was *"Annual planning occurs in the context of a multi-year development plan for the school"*. It is important to consider the need to financially prepare an annual plan for the CPD of the entire institution and its offered programs, and the English teacher education program in particular. This annual planning should account for both staff needs and the various programs' needs. The financial management should have good annual planning to obtain monetary support from outside of the assigned funding by the government, as the participating tertiary institutions in this study are all public and depend solely on government resources. Of course, the assigned funding is not enough to run all of the activities and to sustain CPD for all of the staff and student-teachers. The need to outsource is critical, perhaps by selling services to the outside community by running workshops on speaking or reading, for instance. Indeed, this finding was in line with the international study reported by Barber and Mourshed (2007), which highlights the importance of having an effective and strategic annual implementation plan to address educational needs.

Regarding importance and performance, the lowest indicator of financial capital was the same, namely, "*There is appropriate involvement of stakeholders in the planning process"*. Financing and budgeting are mainly conducted by administrators. The financing issue depends mainly upon the government. In fact, schools do not have the right to maintain their own accounts, in spite of the heavy workloads involved in managing finances. This finding was in line with some previous research that was carried out in the state of Victoria, as cited by Caldwell and Harris (2008) who reported that school leaders who are entirely occupied with financial management might be overwhelmed by such a task. Accordingly, this finding suggests the importance of having support staff for the management of finances, giving those workers senior status to work as one financial management team that can align the institution's budget with emerging needs.

The highest indicator of spiritual capital was found to be the same from the two lenses of importance and performance, namely, "*There are high levels of trust between the school and members of the community"*. The emphasis on spiritual capital is quite new in the field of educational research. Of course, educational institutions should have strong moral purposes that echo all of the community members. Hence, there must be mutual trust and respect between the academic staff of the tertiary institution, on the one hand, and the community members, on the other hand. Educational institutions should promote strong relationships with the community and shared values about life and learning. The community members, on their part, can see the results in quality teachers who share their values about life and learning and acceptable beliefs (in Malaysian society) that effectively serve the community. Accordingly, the community trusts the school for its quality products, which then contributes to the community in a positive way, and for its work on projects that serve the entire community; it is not just a matter of attending the school and doing research but also of making a meaningful contribution to the community. An example is the I-CARE inspired project as well as other projects that cater to the needs of disadvantaged students who are marginalised in life. With these types of projects, disadvantaged students have chances to reach certain levels of literacy, especially in the English language. Therefore, there is a real and honest commitment on the school's part to serve its community. This commitment leads to high levels of mutual trust and respect between the school and the community. This finding was in line with the findings of an international project that was carried out in 6 countries by Caldwell (2009).

In terms of importance and performance, the lowest indicator of spiritual capital was the same, namely, *"Parents and other stakeholders are active in promoting the values and beliefs of the school"*. The roles of parents in celebrating values may have been the lowest indicator because, in the Malaysian context, promoting values and beliefs is thought to solely be the school's responsibility. This finding indicates that there is dissatisfaction on the lecturers' part with the overall performance regarding this specific capital and that there is always room for improvement. Indeed, spiritual capital should be everyone's responsibility, especially as today's world is facing tough challenges regarding spiritual capital as a result of modernisation, globalisation, and technology. Therefore, current student-teachers are spiritually challenged and need guidance, in terms of their spiritual development, to be fully aware of and educated about immoral activities occurring amongst students. In that sense, the whole community should be active in celebrating moral values to sustain the production of quality teachers who are equipped not only with the latest knowledge and skills but also with beliefs and good ethics. Surprisingly, this finding, as the lowest indicator, was not in line with the recent literature, which emphasised the importance of parents' and other community members' roles in promoting spiritual capital.

Regarding social capital, the highest indicator from the perspective of importance was *"The school draws from and contributes to networks to share knowledge, address problems and pool resources"*. Engaging in effective networking is critical to any educational institution's success; collaborations and innovations must be encouraged and celebrated. Regarding Malaysian public tertiary institutions, networking should occur on two levels: nationally and internationally. On the one hand, national networking should take place between knowledge bodies, such as other higher tertiary institutions, both public and private, as well as with the MOE and MOHE. On the other

hand, international networking should occur between knowledge bodies outside the country, within Asia and around the globe. It was previously reported that the participating tertiary institutions enjoy strong national networking with their sister tertiary institutions, such as the MELTA (a voluntary non-profit organisation), and international networking with other tertiary institutions in China, Australia, Thailand and several other countries. Hence, this finding echoes the findings of the international project in six countries (Australia, the US, England, Wales, Finland, and China), where the selected schools had strong links with others through either formal or informal education networking programs (Barber and Mourshed, 2007; Caldwell and Harris, 2008; Caldwell and Spinks, 2008). Therefore, networking in clusters is very fruitful due to the sharing of knowledge, skills and facilities as well as the provision of solutions for emerging problems. In some cases, the sharing process even takes place among teachers and lecturers, as is the case in Finland. Similarly, in Malaysia, this type of networking occurs when lecturers from sister universities are invited to give speeches or workshops on certain topics or even to conduct research.

The highest indicator of social capital from the perspective of performance was *"The school draws cash or in-kind support from individuals, organisations, agencies and institutions in the public and private sectors, in education and other fields, including business and industry, philanthropists and social entrepreneurs"*. Empowering links with other educational institutions, organisations, and business agencies is essential to any educational institution, whether in the public or private sector, to support collaboration and innovation. All of the participating universities in this study are government-funded universities; thus, they enjoy strong links with the MOE and MOHE in addition to their relationships with the MELTA association, which is an example of a non-profit voluntary organisation for English teachers. A noteworthy feature of networking with non-profit organisations is that the relationship between social capital and spiritual capital will be strengthened, as this sort of organisation illustrates a moral purpose; that is, networking only for the sake of knowledge sharing. Regarding agencies, established links with several business agencies and philanthropies were documented in this study, such as links with the Science Centre for Educational Research, Hiroshima University and NADO (in India), in addition to collaboration with the Maldives. Furthermore, relationships with institutions such as UNESCO and APDIP are expanding. Yet, philanthropic efforts in Malaysia are still relatively small compared to the achievements seen in the US and England. This finding agrees with findings reported by Caldwell and Spinks (2008), Caldwell and Harris (2008) indicating that schools have founded strong links and even partnerships with Rolls-Royce and RM for ICT as well as with HSBC. This finding was also in line with the UAE example of philanthropic effort, represented by the US$10 billion foundation of the United Arab Emirates Vice President and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum that aims to invest in human knowledge development by promoting research and education Foundation (2007).

The lowest indicator of social capital, from the lenses of both importance and performance, was *"Parents and other members in the community are advocates of the school and are prepared to take up its cause in challenging circumstances"*. Engagement with the community is a fairly new concept to the participating Malaysian tertiary institutions. Only recently were departments of industry and community networking established in most of the studied schools. Not only that, but

there are also some nominated deputy deans chairing those vital departments. Consequently, the department of community engagement is still progressing, as it is newly involved in attempting to connect teacher education with the community. Thus, this indicator may have been the lowest because community engagement is a new concept. Hence, schools need to prioritise this aspect by increasing the number of projects serving the community or even by making use of the Western universities' experiments by specifying a day of the week for lecturers to mingle in the school areas to help out with a variety of tasks; this way, they could have first-hand information to bring back to their classrooms. Such a program would be an outstanding opportunity to build trust between schools and the community members. Indeed, there are some encouraging improvements in this regard that justify a more proactive approach. Instead of assigning blame for this relative lethargy, it would be better to make some meaningful contributions to the entire community. Unexpectedly, this finding, which was the lowest indicator, was in contrast to the international project, where it ranked second as a priority (Caldwell, 2009) parents were considered strong supporters of schools in each of the six countries. This close relationship resulted from the important roles that schools play in opening their facilities to the communities in Australia, England, Finland, Wales and the US. This was not the case in China, where local community members were invited from time to time to give their impressions and to pronounce their expectations and needs to the schools.

The present study also examined the positive and significant relationships among the four forms of capital (intellectual, financial, social, and spiritual capital). This analysis is important because when practices and activities occur in the school to enhance one specific form of capital, all of the other forms of capital are either directly or indirectly improved. For example, networking with other knowledge bodies enhances both intellectual and social capital through the sharing of knowledge, skills and experiences. Furthermore, undertaking inspired projects benefiting community members enhances the spiritual, social and, of course, intellectual capital for aligning values and attitudes towards life and learning while also providing the community with a variety of programs to harness the intellectual capital of the broader community. Additionally, organising or co-organising conferences, seminars and workshops enhances intellectual capital; up-to-date knowledge and the latest skills can then be exchanged. Such activities also strengthen financial capital, as money is generated by such events. Social and financial capital can also be strengthened when networking with business agencies. Another way of enhancing intellectual, financial and social capital is represented in conducting research together, with a group of lecturers from different schools, or even different universities, joining together for research and publication purposes. This approach suggests a very good solution for limited resources. Collaboration and networking with non-profit organisations and institutions increases spiritual capital and, of course, social capital. Indeed, networking with MELTA strengthens the four forms of capital, as it is a voluntary and non-profit association that promotes gatherings of intellectuals in the field for different activities, such as conferences and publications, as well as for editing services.

This finding mirrors the findings of the international project, which investigated the transformation of schools Caldwell and Harris (2008) strong interactions were recorded among the four forms of capital, indicating that they do not stand in isolation. Additionally, those links strengthen the learning process and also benefit community members and organisations. Those

study findings are in line with Malloch's description. Malloch (2003) of spiritual capital and how it interacts with both social and intellectual capital. Glaeser *et al.* (2002) emphasised the strong interactions between social and intellectual capital, and Harris (2010b) highlighted the critical role that social capital plays in transformation when aligned with the other forms of capital. Woodberry (2003) stated that religious missionaries invest in education by founding institutions that harness the moral purposes of schools. Cuttance and Stokes (2000) reported that establishing links with community members harnesses intellectual capital by exchanging a wide range of skills. In England, Goodfellow and Walton (2008) noted the presence of powerful relationships, especially between social and intellectual capital, in partnerships with specialist schools, such as music and foreign languages. The relevant literature demonstrates that there are strong relationships between social and financial capital symbolised by the sharing of facilities with the community and the creation of partnerships with organisations such as Mercedes-Benz in the US (Zhao *et al.*, 2008).

4. CONCLUSION

Tertiary institutions should be dedicated to generating commitment to quality teacher education programs all over the world. This study provides evidence of the importance of quality pre-service English teacher education programs with the four forms of capital (i.e., intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social) as determinants of quality. The present research focuses on improving the quality of pre-service English teacher education programs through the selection of high-quality staff who are capable of and devoted to addressing the visions and missions of quality English teacher education programs. In addition, excellence in research, publication and community service are characteristics of quality programs.

Furthermore, there are positive significant correlations among the four forms of capital because when practices and activities are initiated by the school to enhance one specific form of capital, all of the other forms of capital are either directly or indirectly improved. Thus, to state the obvious, teaching is a noble profession, and quality teachers are highly esteemed members of the community. The need to consistently strive for excellence requires staff to pursue improvements to their performance with the support of their schools.

Future research be conducted to identify the priorities for further development of the four forms of capital to improve the quality of English teacher education. A qualitative study is needed to focus on exploring the challenges in enhancing the four forms of capital.

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