EXPLORING YOUTHS' ATTITUDE ON PALM OIL INDUSTRY IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract: The oil palm industry has been one of the main contributors to the Malaysian economy and needs skilled laborers to sustain it. However, majority of workers in the country's palm oil plantation are foreign workers. It is timely that the government looks into how the local manpower can be increased to contribute to the production and sustainability of the industry. One of the ways of addressing this issue would be to increase the youths' knowledge on palm oil industry in Malaysia and empower them to be skilled workers in this industry. The perception that Malaysian youths are not interested in palm-oil based jobs requires substantiation from empirical evidence on their attitude and knowledge on this industry. This problem sets the objective for this research that is, to identify Malaysian youths' attitude towards participating in the industry. A set of questionnaire was designed based on the Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice' model (KAP) and Need Analysis theory. Respondents were youths from high school. To compare the youths' attitude based on their exposure to this industry, the schools were chosen based on the rural and urban divide where the rural schools are in close proximity to the palm oil plantation and the urban schools are far from the plantation area. Two schools were chosen to represent urban and rural regions respectively, making it a total of 4 schools. The findings show that youths from rural schools exhibit more positive attitude toward the industry compared to youths from the urban schools. The findings would help the Malaysian government through the Malaysian Palm Oil Board to strategize on increasing the involvement of the locals in this industry.

Keywords: palm oil industry, youths' attitude, KAP, needs analysis, MPOB

INTRODUCTION

The Malaysian palm oil industry is experiencing a shortage of local workers where the majority of workers (77%) in palm oil plantations are from neighbouring countries such as Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Myanmar (Berita Harian, July 2017). While foreign manpower plays an undeniably important role in relation to palm oil production, there are concerns that come along with absorbing foreign manpower as permanent workers, for example the increased risk of social problems, rising squatter settlements, citizenship and so on. The influx of foreign workers is also expected to increase the responsibilities of security forces in ensuring safety and surveillance (Utusan Malaysia, January 2017). Therefore, it is timely

that the government is exploring ways in which local manpower can contribute to the industry's productivity and sustainability (The Borneo Post, September 2017, Zainol 2015). The researchers believe that one effective way to manage this issue is by educating Malaysian youths about the palm oil industry. This is important as the majority of youths are more inclined to migrate to cities and work in myriad of jobs, such as being a petrol pump attendant and manning a cash register at a supermarket, only to have the outcome of these collective jobs contribute a minor percentage towards improving their quality of life, as opposed to the opportunities for self-improvement and advancement that the palm oil industry stands to offer. Due to these observations, this research

aims to identify youths' practices, knowledge, and attitude towards palm oil and the industry.

It is hoped that suggestions can be brought forward on ways to create awareness among Malaysian youths on career opportunities within the palm oil industry to reduce dependency on and the influx of foreign workers, as well as to create more channels to improve youths' quality of life. In addition to creating awareness regarding its benefits and career opportunities, this study also hopes to assist the youths as a means towards securing the economy, inline with supporting the Malaysian youth development policy. The ultimate aim of the government's transformation plan for the youth is to develop future generation who are united, able and dynamic to ensure the continuity of the country's development (*https:// www.najibrazak.com/en/blog/transformasi-nasional-2050/*)

This study is guided by the following objectives:

1. Exploring the extent of knowledge and exposure that both urban and rural youth have of the various skills and business education that exist within the palm oil industry. This is known as existing needs in a Needs Analysis framework.

2. Identifying the exposure that youth in both urban and rural areas have of training and activities provided by the Malaysian palm oil industry.

3. Analysing the ideal needs for youths in urban and rural areas in order to improve their interest and awareness of how imperative the palm oil industry is as the largest contributor towards the nation's economy. In a Needs Analysis framework this is known as ideal needs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Malaysian society's tendency towards using palm oil is mainly influenced by traditional factors rather than promotional activities. A study carried out by Izzah Syazwany Mohd Nasir, Noraida Abdul Rani and Er Ah Choy (2015) on Malaysian's awareness and reception towards palm oil products discovered that 90 percent of users decided on palm oil products based on the popularity of certain brands, cost effectiveness, nutritional value, and promotions carried out by cooking oil companies.

According to Zaki Aman, Er and Chamhuri Siwar (2015), developments in palm oil cultivation have improved the socioeconomic conditions of the communities involved. In addition to preserving the natural environment, sustainable developments in palm oil cultivation also provides clean water and fresh air. This study also discovered that 75.68% of respondents are interested to work in the palm oil industry, where the remaining respondents claimed that it was necessary. 89.18% of respondents also agreed that it is completely unnecessary to employ foreign workers, and 10.82% agreed that it is unnecessary for MPOB to employ foreign workers. All respondents agreed that a palm oil assistance scheme was extremely necessary for them in order to jump start their long term journey to provide for their families and succeed in the palm oil industry.

During a press conference, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi urged Malaysian youths to undertake jobs in the "Dirty, Difficult, and Dangerous" or 3D sectors in order to reduce the number of foreign workers in Malaysia. According to him, Malaysia would no longer be dependent on foreign workers if Malaysian youths develop an interest in plantation work, for instance in the rubber and palm oil industries (Rahimah Abdullah, Astro Awani, February 14, 2016).

As part of the 2012 Economic Transformation Programme, an initiative that sought to reduce tariffs for agriculture and manufacturing products based on a bilateral free trade agreement (FTA) was proven to be successful when exports to Pakistan increased from 1.1 million tonnes in 2000 to more than 2.2 million tonnes in 2010 (Yusof Basiron & Mohd Arif Simeh, 2005). Government initiatives have helped improved palm oil industries directly and indirectly. In the field of education where the population of youths are readily available for knowledge input, various measures were embedded in the schools to inculcate positive values to the youths. Nevertheless, according to Ardi Marwan, Bambang Sumitono dan Nora Mislan (2012), while rural schools in Malaysia have a significant role to play in developing the country and community, they are often overlooked by the government especially with regards to its role in the nation's economic transformation agenda. This might be

due to the locations in which various institutions are placed, for example most education and admeanstrative institutions are located in urban areas (Theobold, 2005), whereas rural schools are placed in remote and provincial parts of the country (Rahimah Abdullah, Astro Awani, February 14, 2016). This factor has played an important part in this study.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

This research employs two research frameworks as the basis for formeang issues and analysis. The first is the Needs Analysis framework that answers milestones for the research questions, and the second is the KAP model which is an abbreviation for Knowledge, Attitude, Practices (KAP) that guides the process in creating questionnaire for data collection and analysis. These two frameworks help provide insight to the target respondents' level of need from a Knowledge, Attitude and Practice aspect and in this instance, their knowledge, attitude and practice with regards to the palm industry in Malaysia.

Needs Analysis

The purpose of using this framework is to measure teenagers' comprehension about palm oil industries and identify their existing and ideal needs with regards to the Malaysian palm oil industry. The Needs Analysis framework is a process to identify and assess the needs of a particular community or a target group for a study. Identifying needs is a process that involves both the issues facing the target population, as well as potential solutions. These needs (or requirements) are categorised as existing requirements and ideal needs (Witkin et al., 1995). In Needs Analysis, the difference between a community's existing and ideal needs can be rectified if the community or target group is ready and willing to accept changes (Reviere, 1996). Needs assessment involves a process of identifying needs and developing awareness on current conditions and desired conditions. Existing requirements refer to early needs at the current conditions whilst ideal needs refer to the exact needs based on the desired conditions. This research framework is suitable for this study as it focuses on actions that need

to be taken rather than status quo or actions that have previously been carried out, which is what most programme assessments focus on. The analysis is a way to understand the needs of future communities and target groups.

Altschuld *et al.* (2000) describes three different phases within a target group based on their respective needs. The first phase that exists within a group are those who directly receive a service that will be assessed. The second phase consists of individuals or groups that are involved in delivering a valuable service. The third phase on the other hand, involves resources and inputs that are needed to solve a problem, for example infrastructure, buildings, compensation, etc. The analysis of this research focuses on the needs of the target group's first phase, which are the teenagers that receive direct exposure regarding Malaysia's palm oil industry.

The needs analysis carried out in this study involved reviewing the necessary conditions that would attract the interest of Malaysian youths to be involved in the country's palm oil industry.

There were four steps in analysing this research.

The first step was identifying the target group. The target group for this study (the first phase target group) were students from several schools near a palm oil plantation. The study mainly focused on students that were not academically inclined, as there is a higher chance that these students will also be among those who migrate to urban areas to seek odd jobs that, when compared to the palm oil industry, tend to be less financially and developmentally rewarding, with less opportunities for advancement. By focusing on the keys aspects in a needs analysis which are the type of needs, existing needs and ideal needs (McKillip, 1998), this research also aims to create awareness and exposure among Malaysian youths regarding the various career and development opportunities within the palm oil industry to not only reduce dependencies on foreign workers, but also to expand possibilities to improve quality of life among youths. In addition to raising the youths' knowledge and awareness on the benefits and career opportunities in palm oil industry, this study also aims to assist the youths to strengthen their socioeconomic conditions and to further support Malaysia's youths' development policy.

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The second step is a full description of the target group and their surroundings, whereas step three identifies issues as well as potential solutions. It is important to collect data from more than one homogenous group in order to provide a more accurate and comprehensive description, therefore students from four schools with different backgrounds were selected as the study's target group. The main focus was to identify research voids for the purpose of a needs analysis. The fourth step is known as the needs assessment (McKillip 1998) which covers an analysis of needs that have been identified through research findings. This step helps to anticipate crucial needs as well as conflicts that may arise between these needs and other needs. This step also helps in identifying whether there has been a consistent reception of the identified needs by the target group. For example, specific programmes might be necessary for those who wish to increase their understanding of the palm oil industry and consider it as a career option in the future.

THE KAP MODEL

This model can be described based on Figure 1 below:
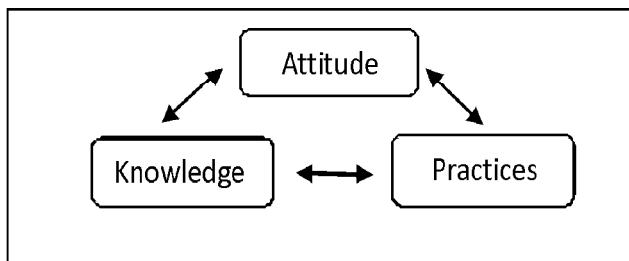

Figure 1 : The KAP model

The KAP model is a research method that measures a community's knowledge, attitude and practice, where "knowledge" refers to a community's understanding of a particular research problem, and in this case, their understanding of the palm oil industry. Most Malaysians would have a basic understanding of the industry, for example the various uses of palm oil, the production process, the plantations and so on. "Attitude" refers to their attitude towards the subject matter, and in this instance, their attitude and sentiment towards this industry.

For example, a youth from the rural area might be more attuned and accepting of working in the industry as a plantation manager or operator, whereas a highly educated youth from the urban area might have the opinion that this is not a suitable careeer path for them.

"Practise", on the other hand, refers to how an individual or community responds to the matter at hand, in this instance, whether a youth would choose to work in the palm oil industry or if they would opt to migrate in hopes of a more comfortable work environment.

However according to Azwar (2003), "attitude" refers to a person's attitude towards an object, issue, or individual, whether they like, trust, and enjoy, or not. Additonally, Maramis (1999) opines that feelings are a form of positive or negative sentiment, and can also be described as a state of mind that is either positively or negatively experiencing something.

These definitions describe attitude as a reflection of an individual's actions and temperament, whereas feelings are an individual's sentiments and thoughts towards particular situations, such as happiness, sadness and so on. Practise is the manifestation of attitude and knowledge, where in this study, it can be referred to as how an individual or community exercise their knowledge of the palm oil industry in their day to day lives. By understanding their level of knowledge, attitude and practise, it enables and facilitates awareness-building efforts within the community in an effective way. As the findings following the receipt and analysis of the questionnaire results are too large, this paper will only discuss the findings from the "attitude" section in order to have a more focused discussion.

Conducting a study that employs the KAP-based questionnaire method begins by selecting a sample. The sample size must be large enough that it is able to represent the research population, but does not complicate the analysis. According to Bailey (1978) a minimum sample size of 30 respondents is sufficient to ensure statistical accuracy. However, this study comprised of 200 students across four schools in Selangor and Pahang. Splitting into sub-categories is encouraged to obtain findings that are potentially interesting.

For this study, the sampel was selected from a group of 16 year old students as this is a critical age to equip them with knowledge and awareness regarding educational and career opportunities following their completion of secondary school. The sample was then separated according to location, where they were categorised into urban or rural schools. This was to observe whether there is any difference in attitude between the two groups that have a difference in distance to development, and to palm oil plantations. Teenagers in urban areas are closer to development and have not experienced life surrounded by palm plantations, whereas teenagers in rural areas attend schools that are surrounded by palm plantations.

METHODOLOGY

Data collection was carried out by following these 5 steps:

1. Identifying schools that would fall within the study's scope, which are schools that have moderate academic achievements

2. Based on (1), identifying 2 schools that can be classified as urban and 2 schools that are in the vicinity of palm plantations

3. Preparing a set of questions based on KAP to extend needs from the target group's attitude towards the palm oil industry

4. Field research in all 4 schools. Students between the age of 16 and 17 are briefed on MPOB and the palm oil industry before completing the questionnaire. Focus groups were carried out following the questionnaire.

5. Questionnaires are analysed by the latest SPSS software.

For this study, the Ministry of Education determeaned the rural and urban schools and the study received cooperation from two schools in the state of Selangor for the urban category, and two schools in the state of Pahang within a palm plantation for the rural category. The rural schools were located within a palm oil plantation/estate to observe whether specific proximity to palm oil impacts youths' level of knowledge and attitude towards the industry.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Discussions on research findings can be sepaarated into two sections. The first section comprises of data analysis for 281 respondents, and the second section is the data obtained from questionnaires and analysis of respondents' attitude towards the palm oil industry in Malaysia.

(i) Respondent's Profile: The findings are obtained from 281 respondents from 4 schools; 2 in urban areas and 2 from rural areas. Out of the 281 respondents, 39.9 percent are male and 60.1 percent are female. 220 respondents or 78.3% are Malay, 19 (6.8%) are Chinese, 28 (10%) Indian and 14 (15%) are from other ethnicities.

The distribution of respondents based on the schools' location is displayed in Table 1 as follows:

Table 1
Rural and urban respondents distribution

Location	Frequency	Percentage
Urban	142	50.5
Rural	139	49.5
Total	281	100.0

Based on table 1, 142 respondents (50.5%) comprise of secondary school students in urban areas, whereas 139 respondents (49.5%) are from rural areas. This demonstrated that a large number of respondents involved in this study is almost equal in terms of frequency and percentage.

The background of students' parents is an important factor in shaping an individual's attitude. In this study, most of the mothers of both urban and rural respondents are housewifes, and most of the respondents' fathers are not employed full time. The following figures illustrate their backgrounds.

(ii) Findings and Analysis: The questionnaire which functions as the core of data collection for this study comprises of four main components: Respondent's background, and 3 components of the KAP questionnaire model which are Knowledge, Attitude, and Practise. The discussion for this paper will focus on the Attitude component and its relation to the Needs Analysis which comprise of Existing Needs and Ideal Needs.
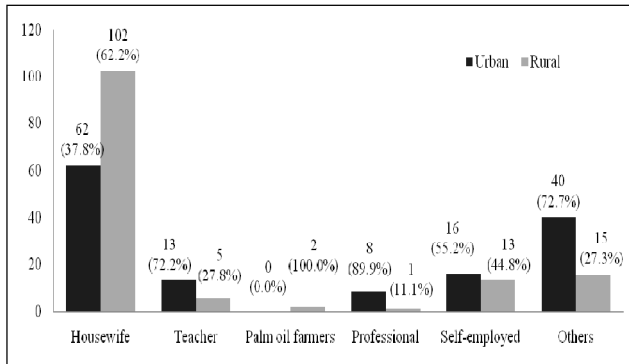
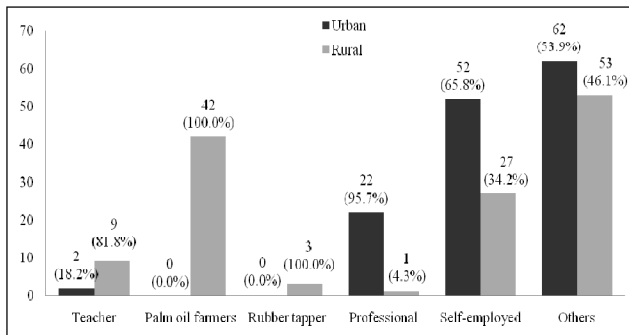**Figure 2: Mother's employment profile according to school**

Figure 3: Father's employment profile according to location of school

There are 11 items in this component, however for discussion purposes only questions 2, 3, 4, 5 and 10 will form the basis for this discussion. Questions that will not be analysed are questions meant to support answers to questions 2, 3, 4, 5, and 10. The following are all the questions answered by respondents:

1. The palm oil cultivation process is detrimental to the balance of flora and fauna in Malaysia
2. Most employment opportunities in the palm oil industry are focused solely on labourers
3. Low and middle-income households are more inclined to use palm oil in daily meal preparations
4. High income households are more inclined to use olive oil in their daily meal preparations as opposed to palm oil
5. The palm oil industry offers a sizeable income which is at par with other professional fields
6. The palm oil industry is a physically and mentally challenging field of work

7. The palm oil industry is an appealing career sector for Malaysian youth
8. The palm oil industry creates many job opportunities in Malaysia
9. The palm oil industry does not guarantee a bright future for youths
10. The Malaysian palm oil industry does not require foreign manpower
11. Youths do not require high academic achievements to join the palm oil industry

Each statement is measured in the form of frequency and percentages, and then the level of range is summarised by observing the mean and standard deviation following frequency calculation.

Analyis for question A2: Most employment opportunities in the palm oil industry are focused solely on labourers

Table 2
Frequency and percentage of responses to A2

	Frequency	*Percentage*
Strongly disagree	54	19.2
Disagree	76	27.0
Neutral (N)	94	33.5
Agree	43	15.3
Strongly agree	14	5.0
Total	281	100.0

The frequency distribution of students' attitudes in answering A2 demonstrates that at 94 respondents (33.5%), a majority of respondents are neutral towards this statement. This is followed by 76 (27.0%) who Disagree, 54 people (19.2%) who Strongly Disagree, 43 people (15.3%) Agree and finally 14 people (5.0%) Strongly Agree with statement A2. The responses can best be visually presented as in the following Figure 4.

The number of people who disagreed with question A2, which is "Most employment opportunities in the palm oil industry are focused solely on labourers", indicated that the youths are not aware that the palm oil industry has been employing many foreign workers, hence, this result is a point to be noted. The study could be replicated

to other schools in Malaysia and a stronger conclusion could be made out of the Malaysian youths' awareness on this fact, however, as the representation of them have shown here, knowledge on palm oil industry has to be embedded in the youths' reading.
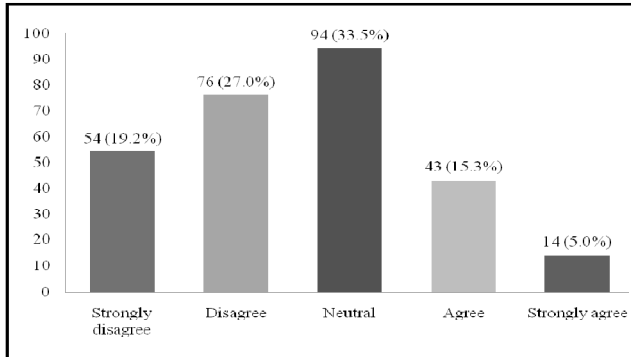

Figure 4: Frequency and percentage of responses to A2

The frequency and percentage distribution for A2 based on location of schools is displayed in the figure as follows:
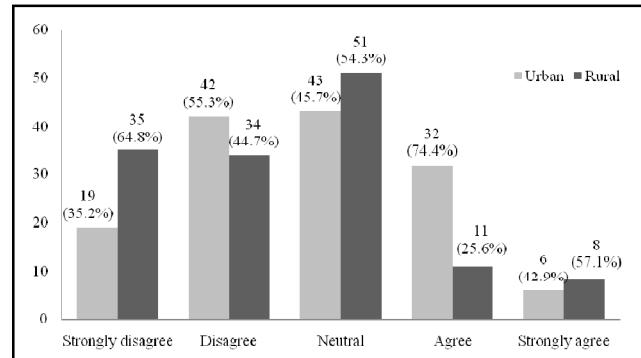

Figure 5: Respondents response towards item A2

Table 3 depicts the analysis of mean and standard deviation levels for students' A2 attitude towards the palm

Table 3
Mean and Standard Deviation for item A2

	Urban			Rural		
	SMK U1 *SMK U2*	*SMK U1* *SMK U2*	*Total*	*SMK R1* *SMK R2*	*SMK R1* *SMK R2*	*Total*
Mean	2.67	2.97	2.75	2.76	2.28	2.45
SD	1.053	1.150	1.081	1.199	1.050	1.124
Interpretation	Average	Average	Average	Average	Low	Average

oil industry. It can be observed that A2's mean score obtained for both urban and rural areas are at average levels.

Question A3 Analysis: Low and middle-income households are more inclined to use palm oil in daily meal preparations

Table 4
Frequency and percentage of responses for A3

	Frequency	*Percentage*
Strongly Disagree	33	11.7
Disagree	52	18.5
Neutral (N)	95	33.8
Agree	49	17.4
Strongly Agree	51	18.1
No information	1	.4
Total	281	100.0

The frequency distribution for students' A3 attitude demonstrates that a majority of 95 respondents (33.8) are neutral towards this statement. This is followed by 52 (18.5%) who disagree, 51 people (18.1%) who strongly agree, 49 people (17.4%) who agree, and finally 33 respondents (11.7%) strongly disagree with statement A3.
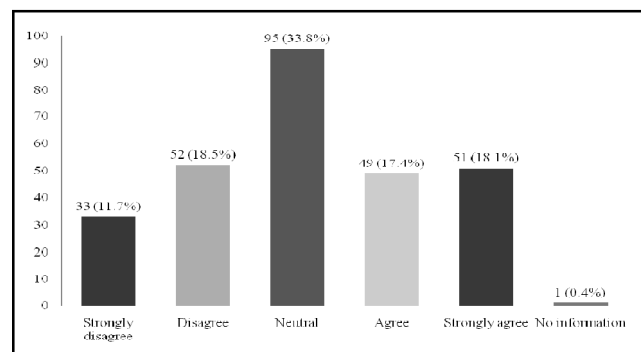

Figure 6: Responses to item A3

1 respondent (0.4%) did not provide a response to this statement.

The A3 frequency and percentage distribution based on schools and schools' location is displayed in the following figure:
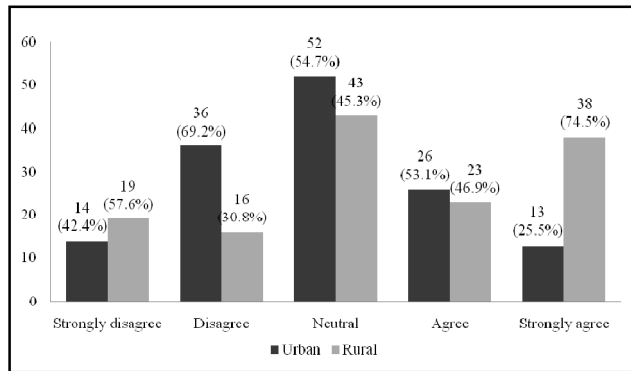

Figure 7: Responses towards item A3 based on location of schools

Table 5 depicts the analysis of mean and standard deviation levels for students' A3 attitude towards the palm oil industry. It can be observed that A3's obtained mean score for both urban and rural areas are at average levels.

Question 4 Analysis: High income households are more inclined to use olive oil in their daily meal preparations as opposed to palm oil

The question was create to gauge the youths attitude toward using the local product, here the palm oil, for their local consumption. Olive oil represents products that are not local and hence, more expensive. The frequency distribution for students' A4 attitudes demonstrates that a majority of 72 respondents (25.6%) strongly agree with this statement. This is followed by 67 (23.8%) who are neutral, 66 people (23.5%) who agree and finally 38 people who respectively strongly disagree and disagree (13.5%) with the A4 statement.The findings

Table 5
Mean and Standard Deviation for Item A3

	Urban			Rural		
	SMK U1 SMK U2	SMK U1 SMK U2	Total	SMK R1 SMK R2	SMK R1 SMK R2	Total
Mean	3.01	2.63	2.91	3.04	3.48	3.32
SD	1.108	1.031	1.099	1.443	1.283	1.352
Interpretation	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average

indicate a negative perception among youngsters from high socioeconomic status towards the use of palm oil in their daily meal preparation. From the finding, it is also inferred that young people's socioeconomic background has a significant association with their choice

of food.Olive oil is perceived as healthier and better choice despite all the benefits that palm oil has to offer. The above finding also indicate a lack of knowledge among the youths, their awareness and exposure on the health and economic benefits of palm oil.

Table 6
Frequency and percentage of responses for A4

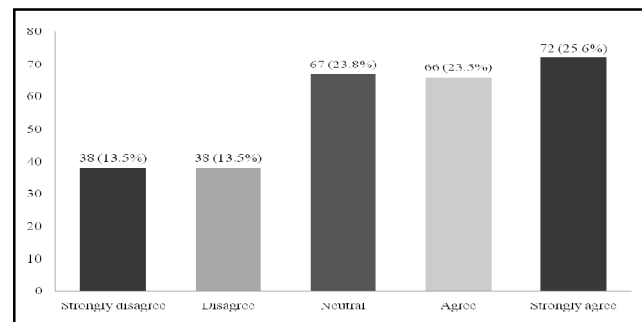|	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	38	13.5
Disagree	38	13.5
Neutral (N)	67	23.8
Agree	66	23.5
Strongly Agree	72	25.6
Total	281	100.0

Figure 8: Responses to item A4

A4 frequency and percentage distrubution based on schools and location of schools is displayed as follows:
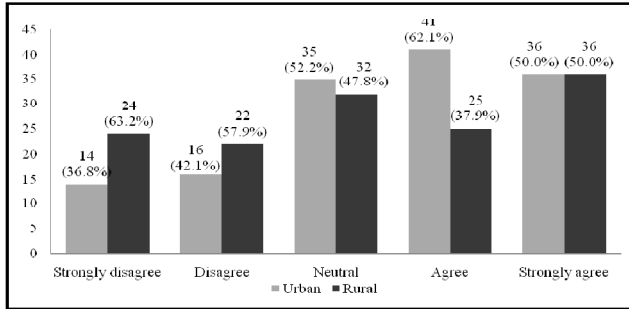

Figure 9: Responses towards item A4 based on location of schools

Table 7 depicts the analysis of mean and standard deviation levels for students' A4 attitude towards the palm oil industry. It can be observed that A4's mean score obtained for both urban and rural areas are at average levels.

Questions A5 analysis - The palm oil industry offers a sizeable income which is at par with other professional fields

The frequency distribution for students' A5 attitudes demonstrates that a majority comprising of 83 respondents (29.5%) are neutral towards this statement. This is followed by 79 respondents (19.6%) who strongly

Table 7
Mean and Standard Deviation for item A4

	Urban			Rural		
	SMK U1 SMK U2	SMK U1 SMK U2	Total	SMK R1 SMK R2	SMK R1 SMK R2	Total
Mean	3.44	3.63	3.49	3.18	3.20	3.19
SD	1.275	1.215	1.259	1.424	1.439	1.429
Interpretation	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average

agree, 71 respondents (25.3%) who agree, 36 respondents (12.8%) who disagree and finally 12 respondents (4.3%) who strongly disagree with statement A5.The finding indicates that young people are basically aware of the job opportunities and future prospects of the palm oil industry in Malaysia. Millward et al. (2006) in their research on young people's job perceptions and preferences found that parental advice is the most frequently considered by young people when making career choices and decisions. Advice from friends and teachers are not as important as parents' opinion. The government, therefore, should design a suitable program to educate youths and parents about career opportunities and job prospect in the palm oil industry in Malaysia.

Table 8
Frequency and percentage of responses for A5

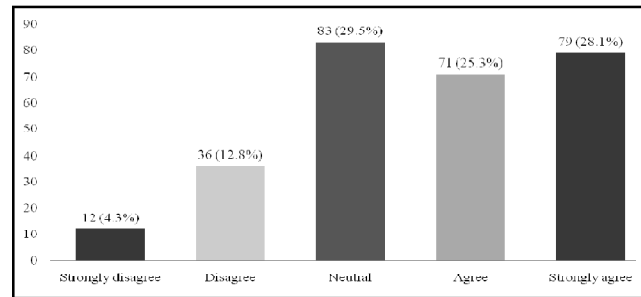|	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	12	4.3
Disagree	36	12.8
Neutral (N)	83	29.5
Agree	71	25.3
Strongly Agree	79	28.1
Total	281	100.0

Figure 10: Responses to item A5

A5 frequency and percentage distrubution based on schools and location of schools is displayed as follows:
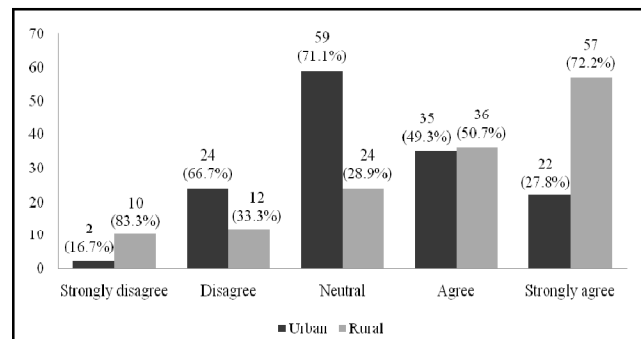

Figure 11: Responses towards item A5 based on location of schools

Table 9 depicts the analysis of mean and standard deviation levels for students' attitude towards the palm oil industry with regards to income level and job opportunities. It can be observed that the mean A5 score obtained by the urban area is at an average level, whereas it is at a high level for rural areas.

Table 9
Mean and Standard Deviation for item A5

	Urban			Rural		
	SMK U1 SMK U2	*SMK U1 SMK U2*	*Total*	*SMK R1 SMK R2*	*SMK R1 SMK R2*	*Total*
Mean	3.23	3.74	3.36	3.84	3.86	3.85
SD	.977	.919	.985	1.313	1.223	1.251
Interpretation	Average	High	Average	High	High	High

Question A10 analysis - The Malaysian palm oil industry does not require foreign manpower

Table 10
Frequency and percentage of responses for A10

	Frequency	*Percentage*
Strongly disagree	36	12.8
Disagree	72	25.6
Neutral (N)	100	35.6
Agree	39	13.9
Strongly agree	33	11.7
No information	1	.4
Total	281	100.0

The frequency distribution for students' attitude demonstrates that a majority comprising of 100 respondents (35.6%) are neutral towards this statement. This is followed by 72 respondents (25.6%) who disagree, 39 respondents (13.9%) who agree, 36 people (12.8%) who strongly disagree, and finally 33 respondents (11.7%) who strongly agree with the statement that the Malaysian palm oil industry does not require foreign manpower. One respondent (0.4%) did not provide a response for this statement. The number of people who are neutral with this indicated a poor level of awareness on the fact the majority of workers in Malaysian palm oil plantations are indeed made of foreign workers. In fact, the Ministry of Human Resources is currently processing working visas for 30,000 foreign labours from Cambodia to work in several palm oil plantations in Sarawak, due to an acute shortage of skilled human resources in the industry (Fletcher, Utusan Borneo, 10th January, 2018).
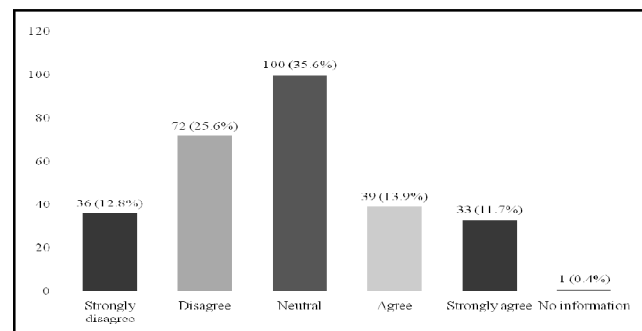

Figure 12: Responses toward items A10

A10 frequency and percentage distribution based on schools and school location is displayed in the figure below:
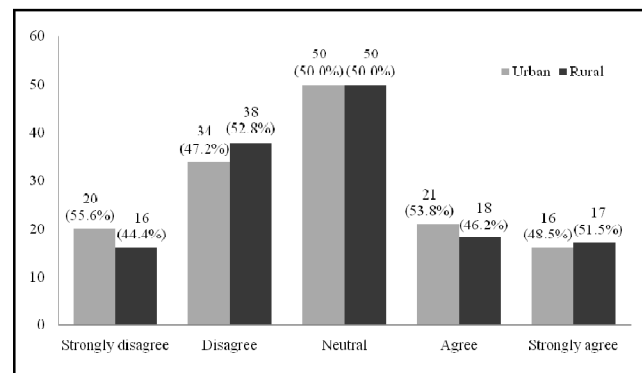

Figure 13 : Respondents response towards item A10

Table 11 depicts the analysis of mean and standard deviation levels for students' A10 attitude towards the palm oil industry. It can be observed that A10's obtained mean score for both urban and rural areas are at average levels.

Table 11
Mean and Standard Deviation for item A10

	Urban			Rural		
	SMK U1 SMK U2	*SMK U1 SMK U2*	*Total*	*SMK R1 SMK R2*	*SMK R1 SMK R2*	*Total*
Mean	2.80	3.00	2.85	2.78	2.92	2.87
SD	1.238	1.000	1.183	1.195	1.144	1.160
Interpretation	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average

Summary of Respondents' Attitude

In order to obtain a summary of the findings, the mean for all items A1 to A11 is calculated to obtain the value of the overall mean. Table 12 shows the summary, where the overall mean score for attitude in both urban and rural areas are at an average level, which indicates that the youths' attitude on the industry is basically average.

Table 12
Overall mean and standard deviation (SD) for attitude

	Urban			Rural		
	SMK U1 SMK U2	*SMK U1 SMK U2*	*Total*	*SMK R1 SMK R2*	*SMK R1 SMK R2*	*Total*
Mean	3.0445	2.9974	3.0329	3.1521	3.1040	3.1210
SD	.38855	.35993	.38099	.46071	.48154	.47319
Interpretation	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average

Table 13
The overall mean and standard deviation for attitudes based on questions

Itemized questions	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD	Interpretation
A1	281	1	5	2.28	1.057	Low
A2	281	1	5	2.60	1.111	Average
A3	280	1	5	3.12	1.246	Average
A4	281	1	5	3.34	1.351	Average
A5	281	1	5	3.60	1.149	Average
A6	281	1	5	3.79	1.060	High
A7	280	1	5	3.26	1.101	Low
A8	280	1	5	3.98	1.092	High
A9	278	1	5	1.95	1.178	Low
A10	280	1	5	2.86	1.169	Average
A11	280	1	5	3.05	1.328	Average
Overall attitude	281	1.73	4.36	3.0765	.43058	Average

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The research findings were linked with the needs analysis (McKillip, 1998), where needs are categorised as existing needs and ideal needs (Witkin *et al.,* 1995).

Preliminary findings demonstrate how palm oil is a product that can be categorised as an existing need amongst respondents who were raised in low to middle-income families. Most of those coming from modest family backgrounds opt to use palm oil in their day to

day meal preparations. Respondents coming from a high income background are more inclined to use olive oil in their day to day meal preparations as opposed to using palm oil. This indicates that they do not view Malaysian palm oil as a product that is an existing need. The findings for this research differs significantly from previous research (Izzah Syazwany Mohd Nasir, Noraida Abdul Rani dan Er Ah Choy 2015) that found that almost all consumers base their palm oil product choices on brand prominence, reasonable prices, nutritional value, as well as promotions carried out by palm oil companies.

The next item observes perceptions that teenagers in both urban and rural areas have towards the Malaysian palm oil industry as a career path that offers sizeable opportunities and income. Findings show that most teenagers in urban areas disagree with the idea that working in the palm oil industry will enable them to earn as high of an income as other professional fields. This demonstrates that this career field is not in their existing nor ideal needs. Teenagers in urban areas do not view working in the Malaysian palm oil industry as an ideal career choice, perhaps due to the lack of exposure on the profitability of this industry.The information from www.Malaysia.100.com (Graduate Barometer 2013) shows that the sectors that the youths are opting for include service sectors such as professional services, accounting, and consulting companies; oil and gas industries, banking, broadcasting, information and communications technology, and telecommunication.

Finally, a total of 100 respondents (35.6%) are neutral towards the statement that the Malaysian palm oil industry does not require foreign labourers. This finding demonstrates youths' lack of knowledge regarding the Malaysian palm oil industry. 72 respondents (25.6%) disagree with the statement, demonstrating the opinion that employing foreign labourers to work in the palm oil industry is an ideal need. Authorities need to take relevant action to change youths' perception towards this industry, particularly as part of the government's efforts to reduce the intake of foreign labourers over time. Reviere (1996) discussed that a community's existing and ideal needs can be overcome if the community or target group is ready to accept certain changes. As Balan, *et al.* (2017) states that it is the comfort of the jobs that attracted the youths

when looking employment, continuous effort is necessary to change the negative perception that teenagers have (particularly in urban areas) towards the palm oil industry in Malaysia, as well as the career opportunities that this industry can provide. Positive results from previous study by Zaki Aman, Er and Chamhuri Siwar (2015) that show the advantages of working in the palm oil plantation and how it has improved the socioeconomic conditions of the communities should be enhanced as a point in the textbooks used by the high-schools in Malaysia. Measures such as this would instill interest among the youths towards considering carreers in the palm oil industries in the country which indirectly benefits the nation socio-economically.

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