

## Factors Affecting The Tendency of Drug Addiction among Malay Ethnic Compared to Chinese Ethnic

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### Abstract

The issue of drug addiction is no longer seen as an unfamiliar matter in the social problems of a country, especially in developing countries. Most countries take this issue seriously and declare it their number one enemy. In Malaysia, the problem of drug addiction is a severe matter that has become the country's main agenda that needs attention. Government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), families, and related individuals have undertaken various debates and discussions to control and contain the elements contributing to drug addiction in this country. Therefore, the gap between the ethnicities involved in the drug issue should be highlighted. In fact, there are more drug addicts among the Malay Muslim ethnic group compared to the Chinese ethnic group. Thus, this conceptual study aims to identify the causes of drug addiction, examine the influence of drug involvement and examine the more dominant factors based on the construct: 1) Religion, 2) Socio-Cultural, 3) Socio-Economic, and 4) Environment, on drug addicts for ethnic Malays and ethnic Chinese in Malaysia. This conceptual study examines subjects, concepts and objectives for future studies guided by literature highlights from various research disciplines. The results of the concept drawn up will give an overview of the factors that influence the tendency of drug addiction among the Malay ethnic group compared to the Chinese ethnic group in Malaysia based on the four constructs that have been determined.

**Keywords:** Drug Addiction, Malay Ethnicity, Chinese Ethnicity, Socio-Cultural, Environment

**Introduction**

In 1983, the government took a new initiative to combat the drug epidemic in the country, where the issue was declared a threat to national safety. That year the problem was declared a threat to national security. The basis behind this policy is to manifest a society free from the threat of drugs. This policy was announced by Y.A.B. Tun Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, former Prime Minister of Malaysia on 19 February 1983 during the launch of the *Kempen Anti Dadah*. The government has created the National Anti-Drugs Committee which is placed under the National Security Council. The government has also approved the establishment of the National Drug Agency which acted as the Secretariat to the National Drug Council and is responsible for all anti-drug efforts. Since then, drugs are considered as the nation's number one enemy, not to mention that the main target of drug addiction is the younger generation who are the backbone and the future of the nation. The rampant trafficking and abuse of drugs can threaten the spiritual, socio-economic, and cultural well-being of the common people and further weaken national resilience and thus, threaten the national security (National Drug Agency, 1997). Therefore, the five main laws relating to drugs are:-

- a) Dangerous Drug Act 1982.
- b) Poison Act 1952.
- c) Drug Dependant (Treatment And Rehabilitation) Act 1983 (Amendment 1998).
- d) Dangerous Drugs (Special Preventative Measure) Act 1985, .
- e) Dangerous Drug (Forfeiture of Property) Act 1988

Drug laws in Malaysia range from prevention to treatment and rehabilitation. In its implementation, there are legislative weaknesses that are continuously identified and amended to improve its efficiency. The severe penalties imposed are a reflection of the government's resolve in combating the problem.

Drugs have been the talk of countless parties, which includes individuals, organizations, even anti-drug government agencies that work specifically to combat the problem, which is understandable, considering that drug has been a bane of our country's existence, and substance abuse has continued to be the nation's number one enemy (National Anti-Drug Agency, 2014). It is worth to mention that drug plays a major role in medicine, but unfortunately, abuse by irresponsible individuals is still rampant. These abuses happen when it is used for reasons other than medical, and happen without being monitored by medical professionals. Drugs indeed have a detrimental effect on the body, behavior and more. These effects severely outweigh the benefit that one can get from abusing drugs. Upon closer observation, substance abuse happens mainly for personal gain such as pain relief, rejuvenation, escaping depression and misery, and many more.

Substance abuse is a global issue, and as a region that embraces changes and development, the Asia Pacific region, including Malaysia, also experiences social issues. One of the first countries that are faced with drug problems are China, with the Opium War, also known as the Anglo-China War, being one of the clear examples. The trade and diplomatic conflict that broke out between China (Qing Dynasty) and the British Empire are directly tied to opium smuggling. The First Opium War that happened between 1839 to 1842, followed by the Second Opium War in 1856 to 1860, demonstrate how committed the Chinese government is in combating the drugs smuggled by the British. At this point, opium was not yet banned by the British, and opium was smuggled freely by traders from British India into China, thus sparking war between the two countries. In the Malaysia context, according to Mahyuddin and Azizah (2011) opium addiction started with addiction among the ethnic Chinese laborer as they

actively migrated to Malaya in 1910. As a consequence, selling and smoking of opium became rampant. Recognizing the danger of opium, after the Second World War, the British resorts to restrict the import and sales of opium, thus leading to the birth of Dangerous Drug Act in 1952.

Substance abuse have a dire impact towards our nation. It not only harms the abusers, but also their family and loved ones due to the existing societal stigma surrounding the issue. substance abuse among members of a community will likely threaten the safety of the community, thus disrupting the harmony and jeopardize the development of the country. Those who are ensnared in the traps of drug abuse will become less productive, and therefore will waste away their productive years. World Drug Report in 2014 estimated around 183000 drug related death in 2012. The figure corresponds with the mortality rate of 40 per million of population aged 15-64 years. This estimates are lower compared to 2011, as reports of death are underreported in some countries in Asia (*World Drugs Report, 2014*).

### Problem Statement

Drug dependency phenomena is a universal problem. Almost all nation experience the issue, where the only separating factor is the scale of the problem, and the severity. In Malaysia, drug dependency issue is a very serious issue that combating it became the main agenda of the nation that demanded full attention. The government is committed to an all-out war on drugs (PDH), since it is the nations number one enemy. According to statistics, Malay have the highest number when it comes to drug addiction at 97,068, or 78.8% of the population (AADK, 2021). Other ethnicities clocked in at a lower number. This can be attributed to Malay being the majority out of the 32.4 million population in the country. Diagram 1 shows the statistics of drug addict by ethnicities released by NADA (2021).

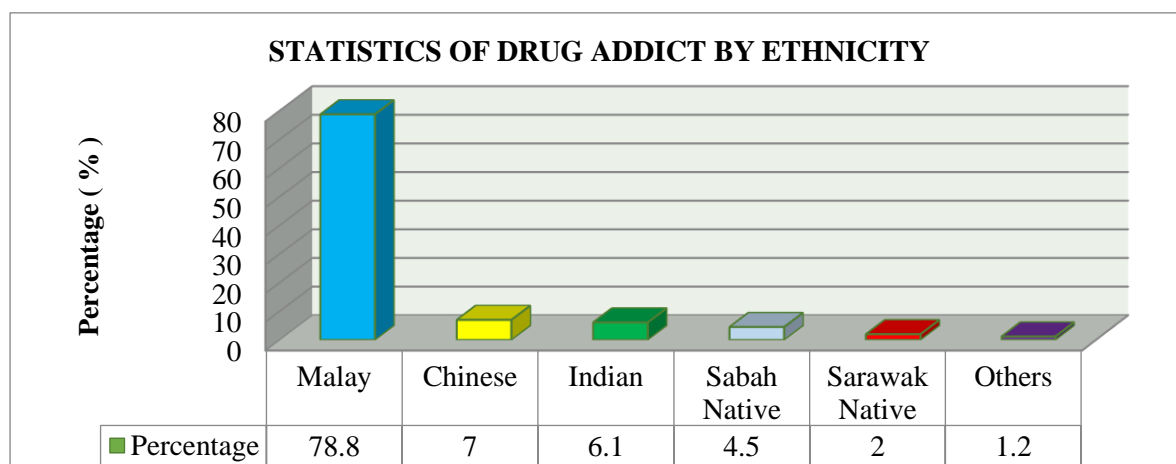


Diagram 1: Statistic of Drug Addict by Ethnicity

Sources: Portal Agensi Anti Dadah Kebangsaan, 2021

According to Nurul Izzah (Harian, 2019), in 2010, 23,642 individuals were reported to have taken drugs in Malaysia. By 2016, this number continues to rise to 30 844. In 2017, a total of 16,931 drug-related arrest were made, where a large chunk of this were imprisonment due to addiction, which in itself is a health and social issue. A report by Astro Awani on 14 June 2017 stated that 33,500 out of 59,600 (roughly 56%) inmates throughout the country were imprisoned duet o drug-related offence. Of these, 71.35% were Malays, and

66% were between 22-40 years of age. In 2018, the Malaysian Prison Department reported that the number of incarcerated individuals have reached 64,000.

This figure far exceeds the capacity of our prisons facilities, which should only be able to hold 52,000 inmates. Far too many Malaysian citizens have lost their lives due to drug problems. In November of 2018, Al-Jazeera reported that between 1,279 individuals were sentenced to death in Malaysia, of which 932 (72.9%) were drug related offence. The cost borne by taxpayers for each inmates is RM35 per day, which amount to RM12, 775 annually (Harian, 2019).

A large number of addict are among the Malays as the majority population in the country. For some, this are considered logical. For a heterogenous country like China, ethnic Chinese made up the majority of the drug addict. Hence, for a Malay majority country such as Malaysia, it is considered normal that Malay would make up the majority of drug addict. However, being a Muslim, their deen should be enough to deter them from getting involved in such a despicable affair. Being the majority does not mean that they also have to make up the majority of individuals involved in social problems. The main objective of this study is to identify the root cause for addiction, examine the factor that may lead to drug use and to examine other more dominant factor based on religious, socio-cultural, socio-economy and environment construct, on Chinese ethnic and malay ethnic drug addict in Malaysia. The study is expected to contribute and assist with relevant authorities related to drug addiction, specifically the National Anti Drug Agency (NADA) and other such agency to better understand and handle the problem and thus to plan a more effective action.

### **Research Objectives and Questions**

The purpose of this study is to identify the root cause for addiction, examine the factor that may lead to drug use and to examine other more dominant factor based on religious, socio-cultural, socio-economy and environment construct, on Chinese ethnic and malay ethnic drug addict in Malaysia. The questions that are used are:

1. What are the causes of drug addiction among the majority of ethnic Malay and ethnic Chinese of Malaysia?
2. Do factors based on religious, socio-cultural, socio-economic, and environmental constructs have a significant influence on drug addicts among ethnic Malays and ethnic Chinese in Malaysia?
3. What are the more dominant factors based on religious, socio-cultural, socio-economic, and environmental constructs on drug addicts among ethnic Malays and ethnic Chinese in Malaysia?

### **Significance of Research**

The study is expected to contribute and assist with relevant authorities related to drug addiction, specifically the National Anti Drug Agency (NADA) and other such agency to better understand and handle the problem and thus to plan a more effective action. The findings of this study is also expected to contribute to the database and thus provide a useful input towards developing a better understanding of drug addict, since there is no studies done on ethnic Chinese in Malaysia.

More specifically, there a six significance of the study. First, it can add value in the literature of drug addict based on cross-culturalism. This study tries to fill the bridge the gap from past studies by shifting the focus in the context of drug addict based on ethnicity (Malay and Chinese) from a diverse background and characteristic in Malaysia. Second, this study

produce data of drug addict based on ethnicity (Malay and Chinese) to be used by NADA. Such data provide a useful information and can help in understanding drug addiction based on ethnicity (Malay and Chinese). This in turn can be useful in planning preventative action. This is in line with NADA visions to formulate new strategies for National Drug Policy, particularly in providing useful input towards strengthening the preventive strategies.

Third, this study is also expected to provide input towards developing a model which can encourage, maintain, and improve the roles of various parties in preventing drug addiction based on ethnicity (Malay and Chinese) in their community. Fourth, this study also provides input towards a preventative model that enlist the role of parents, family, school, community, as well as government and non government organization to collectively combat problem with drug addiction. Fifth, to suggest further research regarding the matter. This is important considering that research is a perpetual analytical task. The findings from this study can pave the way which may lead towards the next relevant study, which hopefully will bring important input in the world of research, and thus contribute towards universal well-being.

Finally, this study is expected to contribute both theoretically and methodically, through the establishment of measuring tools that are capable of testing the factors that affect drug addiction cross-culturally, especially among ethnic Malay and Chinese. This study are vital in helping the government identify the root cause of addiction in both ethnic Malay and Chinese, which in turn may help policy maker since the data obtained through a cross cultural studies are more systematic. Proactive measure are important in restricting the problem from spreading further among Malaysians.

### **Research Limitation**

The limitation of the study are based on the focus of the study, the study's setting and drug rehabilitation facility, the quantity of samples, the design of the study, as well as the instruments employed.

### **Theoretical Framework**

In essence, theory helps researchers to approach different domains of knowledge systematically with a structure understanding, and it is possible for several different field of knowledge to be integrated to create connections between concepts from different disciplines (Azizi et al., 2006). Studies that focus on human behavior utilize theory so frequently that the theories themselves have an impact in the field of research. Past researchers have put out a number of theories that cover a wide range of situations, occurrences conditions and even issue pertaining to human behavior. After conducting the necessary research, this study discovered a hypothesis that can be used to describe issues pertaining to socio-culture, behaviour emotions, and the environment among drug addict based on ethnic Malay and Chinese ethnicity.

### **Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT)**

Originally known as Rational Theory, Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) is a psychotherapy theory introduced by Albert Ellis in 1955 and is one of the cognitive-behavioural approaches for counselling and psychotherapy (Dryden, 2006; Najafi & Branovich, 2014). REBT is also a psychological theory that combines three different types of techniques: cognitive, behavioral, and emotional (David et al., 2004). Ellis maintains that the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral systems interact with one another and have an impact

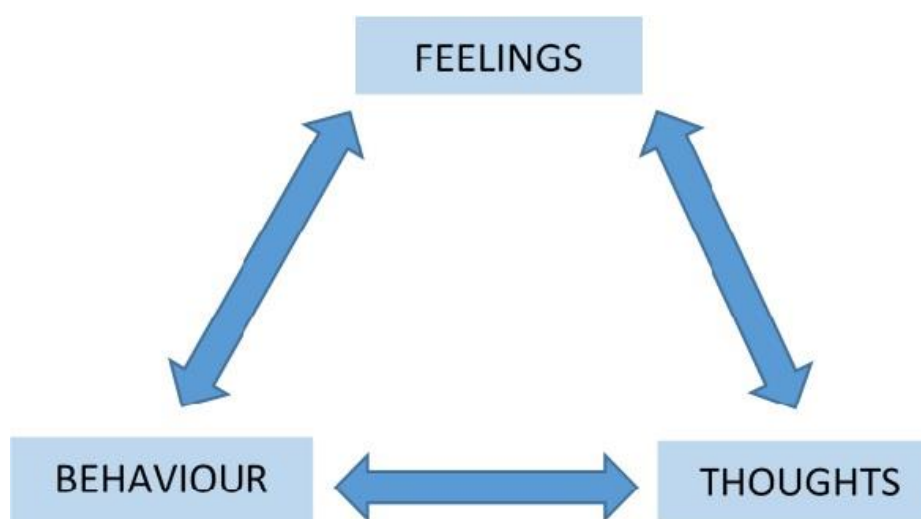
on one another. The fundamental tenet of REBT is the assumption that stress is a complex, human-related issue with an often variable nature (Ellis & Dryden, 1997).

Furthermore, Ellis (1958) believes that irrational thinking is linked to human emotional problems, and that humans have the option of either further contribute towards the problem or take actions to stop it. Additionally, Ellis (1962) maintains that among the things that should be accepted to overcome emotional challenges is that an individual should accept oneself unconditionally as well as developing social connections with the surrounding community in order to deal with the feelings of shame. Ellis (2003) found that the approach used was effective, and Ellis (2003) believed that the individuals choice and actions were what led to the issue.

REBT was introduced in response to criticism of the theory introduced by Ellis (1962), which was thought to be overly cognitive to the point of ignoring the behavioral aspects (David, 2013; Dryden et al., 2010). Additionally, his readings of the works of philosophers like Gautama Buddha, Epicurus, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, John Dewey, and Bertrand Russell further strengthen his conviction that how a person sees and evaluates a matter will affect their emotions and behavior (Ellis, 2003). According to Ellis (2005), the teachings of Epictetus and Marcus from around 2000 years ago were adopted and used as the foundation for the REBT theory, which states that “ people are disturbed not because of what happens, but because of how they judge what happened”.

REBT can help people not only deal with emotional issues, but also improve their behavior (Bernard, 2011). According to Ellis, humans tend to think that a problem emerged when their life goals are not achieved because they are hindered by something. As a result, humans tend to respond and get emotional in order to overcome the obstacles that hinder them from reaching their goal. However, the emotions they're displaying may be healthy or unhealthy negative, while their behavior can be rational or irrational.

Ellis (2001) also believes that cognitive, emotional and behavioral experiences are not experienced separately by humans, but rather as a result of the three elements interacting and influencing one another. This clearly indicates that when one element is affected by the environment or an event, the other elements are also affected. Ellis (2005) also maintains that thinking and feeling are closely related to one another, act in a cause and effect manner and are intrinsically linked. Thus, the four basic aspects of life, namely detecting, moving, feeling, and thinking are experienced concurrently as shown in Diagram 2.



## Diagram 2: REBT Model (Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy, Ellis, 1955)

The REBT model describes the link between the cause of an occurrence, beliefs, and the emotional and behavioral effect as a consequence of an individual's beliefs (DiGiuseppe & Bernard, 1990). REBT is also a model that has cognitive-action oriented teaching, as well as emphasizing on the role of thinking and belief systems as the root cause of the problem. REBT is also a comprehensive model that can address issues pertaining to emotion, cognitive and behavioral, and was introduced to address an individual's emotional disorder, and to provide a sense of pleasure in life (Warren & Baker, 2013).

According to REBT, the human emotions may function healthily (either negative or positive emotion) or unhealthy. Negative emotions are considered healthy when it encourages an individual to change things that can be changed, as well as to make adjustments on things that cannot be changed. For example, the prospect of failing to achieve a goal may lead a person to feel worried, and thus may encourage him to strive so as not to fail. In this particular scenario, concern is a negative emotion, but it can push an individual to strive for their goal.

On the other hand, Unhealthy negative emotions are emotions that drives an individual to obtain something in a rigid manner. Such emotions prevent an individual from making changes and adjustment to a situation (Dryden & Branch, 2008). For example, a student who fails an exam may feel gloomy and refuse to complete his studies. Despair is an unhealthy negative emotion since it prevents people from succeeding in exams. According to Ellis and Dryden (1997), there are five types of healthy and unhealthy negative emotions.

Table 1

*Healthy and Unhealthy Negative Emotions*

No.	Healthy Negative Emotion	Unhealthy Negative Emotion
1	Concern	Anxiety
2	Sadness	Depression
3	Remorse	Guilt
4	Sorrow	Shame
5	Anger	Rage

REBT stated that an individual's beliefs on a life events may be rational (psychological theory) or irrational (Psychopathological theory). Irrational beliefs refers to cognitive appraisal sans logical, empirical, or pragmatic support (David & Cramer, 2010). Irrational beliefs are classified into four categories (David et al., 2009), namely demandingness, awfulizing, low frustration tolerance and global evaluation. According to David, Kangas, Schnur and Monstgomery (2004), an individual's rational and irrational beliefs are caused by an unwanted unpleasant occurrence in their lives. This innate belief will lead to emotion, behavior and cognitive effects (Andy & Patricia, 2014)

Dryden and Neenam (2004) contends that the REBT psychoathology theory are straightforward and easy to comprehend, hence does not necessitate a detailed explanation of the development of psychological disorders. REBT differs from previous theories that focus the discussion solely in the detail biological influences while ignoring the importance of the environment in influencing the cognition, emotions and behavior of an individual (Dryden & Neenam, 2004). REBT as it stands, does not dismiss the influence of the environment and

recognize that the environment has a biological predispositions to the development of psychopathology (Ellis, 2001).

### Literature Review

To date, there has been no research done on cross cultural studies between ethnic Malays and ethnic Chinese drug addicts in Malaysia (Ridhuan Tee Abdullah, 2019). This opens an opportunity for the researcher to highlight certain cross-cultural studies done by scholars on the lifestyle of Chinese and Malay ethnic groups.

The Chinese are proud with the praise, claiming them to be a diligent and well behaved, as well as having a great civilization. This is a negative trait that, according to Purcell (1978), is particularly prevalent among Chinese ethnicities. They are also well known for their chauvinistic attitude, and are convinced that their culture is superior above all others. This view is still prevalent to this day. As much as they seek to identify themselves with their new environment, their cultural affinity towards their mother land poses a significant barrier to achieve racial unity (Abdullah, 2002).

This argument is also supported by Comber (2007), who sees ethnic Chinese as looking down on other races. The notion that views the Malays as lazy and a dawdler are simply incorrect. Comber (2007) however, does not dismiss the diligence and relentless attitude of the Chinese in the context and history of this country. Their significant contribution towards the economy and development through their active involvement in trade and business since the beginning simply can't be denied.

This statement is also supported by Comber (2007), who claims that the Chinese have a negative attitude toward non-Chinese. The Chinese regarded non-Chinese as barbarian. They also look down on the Malay, considering them as lazy, backwards, and unserious.

The Chinese are such an enterprising traders who are adept at managing their affairs and mastering trade activities in the country they dwell in better than any other. They acquire reliable and fast information. It is hard to imagine them to be surpassed by the locals as the most enterprising residents of any country they dwell in, including European ones (Purcell, 1978).

Sir Frank Swettenham once stated: *"Under present conditions the Chinese are the bone and sinew of the Malay states. They are the labourers, the miners, the principal shopkeepers, the capitalists, the holders of the revenue farms, the contributors to almost the whole of the revenue; we cannot do without them"* (Tan et al., 2005).

This is further corroborated by a statement from Sir Francis Light: In 1794, Sir Francis Light had this to say about the economic contribution of the early Chinese in Penang: *"The Chinese constitutes the most valuable part of our inhabitants: They are men, women and children... and they possess the different trades of carpenters, masons and smiths, are traders, shopkeepers and planters: they employ small vessels.... they are the only people from whom a revenue may be raised without expenses and extraordinary effort of government. They are valuable acquisition"* (Ling, 1995).

Light once referred to the Chinese as the most valuable residents, a statement that Swettenham agrees wholeheartedly. The characteristics shown by the Chinese laborers attracted and influenced colonial entrepreneurs and administrators. Their large influx into the country to earn a living is a valuable resource for European entrepreneurs and Chinese miners, since these migrants serve as an 'efficient economic machinery' (Haris, 1990).

Teik (1989), a veteran political figure, delves into the prejudices and stereotypes that exist among the diverse races of Malaysia and frequently led to conflicts. The Chinese



perceived the Malay, just as Frank Swettenham, Stamford Raffles and Hugh Clifford, as a lazy race. The Malays on the other hand perceived the Chinese as opportunist who exploit and leeches on other people. Ethnic Chinese immigrant, just like the Indonesians laborer who came to this country, are always diligent.

He believes, however, that the Malays, who make up the majority and adhere to religious values, will be able to accept non-malays as brothers. The same is true for other non-Malay races. The bond that has existed since 1400 must be preserved in order to maintain a stable Malaysia for all. Leaders need to play their role in reducing racial prejudice among its people. He also suggested that race-focused economic system (DEB) be replaced with a system that respect the wishes and needs of all races.

Ye Lin-Sheng (2005), and english educated businessman, wrote a book on the Chinese dilemma in Malaysia, referencing a book written by Mahathir Mohamad (1970) about the Malay dilemma. This book is an outpouring of experiences, feelings, aspirations, sentiments and perceptions of the Chinese minority towards the Malay majority of UMNO (United Malay National Organization). He delves into the anxieties and dilemmas of the Chinese community as a result of the national policy, which is supposed to favor Malays and bumiputeras only.

He perceived that the economic discrimination against the Chinese are at its worst, by referencing a study written by Gurr (1993), which made comparisons of Malay minorities in Singapore under Chinese administration. He opined that Singapore's Malay minorities are treated better than Malaysia's Chinese minorities. He did, however, come to terms with the tolerance and hospitality shown by the Malays towards the Chinese in this country.

Chew's (1975) study on national unity is also worth discussing, since it has some relevance to the topic highlighted by the researchers. He conducted a comparative study on the problem of unity(racism) between the two major ethnic group in Malaysia, namely the Malays and the Chinese. He tried to delve into three main focus, which is: Why are the Malays less developed than the Chinese? And, why there is a social gap between the Malays and the Chinese.

Strauch (1981) conducted a study on the political standing of the new Chinese village of Sanchun in the Malaysian state of Perak. *Sanchun* refers to the community of ethnic Chinese that inhabits an area within a country that is dominated by the Malays (UMNO) in terms of political hegemony and power.the Chinese community that lives within this group fights to get and defend their rights in a relatively limited situation. Strauch (1981) describes them as having to go through numerous bureaucracies created by the Malays that rules over them. This studies also examines the interaction between the Malay and Chinese elites in an effort to defend their respective rights.

Strauch (1981) is seen to contest the political hgemony and power held by the Malays, which seems to deny the rights and opportunities of the Chinese community. He used the term encapsulation to describe the Chinese who had to obey the administration and higher political hierarchy. The Malays are given the privilege of holding important ministerial positions in the government, while the Chinese are not. Thus, *Sanchun* would move and fight in their community by involving themselves in various affairs, especially economy and trades, as well as the Malay political affairs. In reality, this is the same dilemma faced by most new Malaysian Chinese village.

Based on past cross-cultural research, does the Chinese way of thinking and culture makes them less prone to drug addiction compared to the Malays? This study seeks to pioneer and investigate why Malays became the majority compared to Chinese, despite the fact that ethnic Malays are Muslims. The Malays, bounded by their faith, should've been less

susceptible compared to other races. However, in the Malaysian context, Malays make up the majority of the addiction case. Despite the fact that Malays constitute the majority of the country's population, there must be other factor at play that leads to the high number of drug addicts among the Malays.

During the late 1960s, drug addicts consist of not only the elderly, but the youth as well. They also used a diversified group of drugs, including morphine, heroin and other more potent drugs. During the same period, the Hippies culture swept through the whole globe, our country included. This has a detrimental effect on the youth at the time since they were heavily influenced by the habits of the Hippies (Majid & Rosmin, 1989)

### ***Religious Factor***

Faith and life are two inextricable linked elements religious life is never a deterring factor, rather, upon closer examination in a broader sense, the spiritual element serves as a catalyst for the global socio-economic development and resilience. Past studies indicated that spiritual or religious factor plays a role in shaping positive behavior. This is because religions play an important role in shaping human attitudes and behavior (Arnould et al., 2014) as well as moral behavior (Geyer & Baumeister, 2005). Barro and McCleary (2013) posits that religion works to foster certain behavior. Individuals with strong religious spirituality displays a positive behavior and dissuade them from committing a crime (Brown et al., 2001; Ford & Kadushin, 2016; Cochran et al., 2014).

Studies have also demonstrate that religious factors can reduce immoral behavior among adolescents (i.e., deviant behavior) (Giordano et al., 2015). Religions also plays an important role in reducing anti-social behavior in a society (Giordano et al., 2015). Studies related to faith have also proven that spiritual strength leads to psychological and mental strength in human in the face of health problem, as well as alcohol, drugs and sex addiction (Cochran et al., 2014, Giordano et al., 2015).

Past studies also proves that faith is a factor that help alleviates both emotional and work stress (Kutcher et al., 2010). Religion provides a source of social and spiritual support, optimism, reliance, admiration as well as serving as basis for the formation of behavior (Giordano et al., 2015). It has been proven over and over again that religious factor may provide spiritual support and strength to face any individual problems, mentally, physically and psychologically.

By using Hirschi (1969) Social Control Theory, this study seek to explain the role of faith in controlling human. This theory postulates that an individual bonding with a social institution can reduce a person's tendency to engage in a negative behaviors. The notion of social control contends that an individual can be prevented from engaging in negative behavior through adherence to social institutions such as family and religions. In other words, every one of our actions should be consistent with the norms, culture and the religions that we adhered to. This theory explains how the faith of a person may reduce immoral behavior such as drug abuse.

### ***Socio-Cultural Factor***

Studies pertaining to the socio-cultural influences among addicts are based on lifestyle, cultural customs, familial culture as well as education. Lifestyle is likened to the individual's basic orientation towards life itself (Dinkmeyer & Sperry, 2010). Lifestyle is a dynamic occurrence that drives an individual to engage in daily activities. It is also the basic premise and expectations of a psychological movement in the life of individual. Analysis on the lifestyle

of an individual refers to the cohesion of an individual's movement to achieve a predetermined goal, whether the goal is realistic or not (fictional goal). The formation of this lifestyle depends on the development pattern since childhood. Othman (2010) explains that an individual's well being in a society depends on their lifestyle. Analysis on lifestyle served as a mapping guide to understand the directions of the individual's life even if the individual is uncertain of the destination.

A study by Mohd. Ibrani Shahrudin et al (2011) found that among the factors that caused an addict to relapse are the strong drug memories, a weak will to fight the urge to take drugs, an unwillingness to quit altogether, societal stigma that views them negatively, unemployment and subsequent financial problem to sustain daily life, and reassociating with addict friends. Moreover, there is a close link between addiction and criminal activity. As a result of losing the will and mental strength to work and obtain something for themselves, drug abusers will resort to committing crimes, especially one that pertains to property such as theft, robbery, house breaking and so on in order to acquire money for drugs, and as a consequence, the community will bear the sharp end of the stick (Zakaria, 2014).

According to Mahyuddin and Azizah (2011), these social illnesses are worsening over time as we are faced with an outpour of various stories about both minor and major misbehavior committed by teenagers on a daily basis. According to them, pressure from problems whether personal, family and work is a factor that leads to drug abuse. Pressure that arises from having to deal with the problems leads to emotional stress, which then pulls them into depression until they can no longer handle the pressure. As an escape, they will resort to abusing drugs to forget the issue at hand and to find pleasure. As an example, parents who are occupied with work tend to abandon their children and may alienate them. The children may abuse drugs as a last ditch effort to gain attention from their parents. However, getting out of drug addiction may prove harder than getting into it.

Parents' preoccupation with their respective affairs pose a great impact on the tendency to drug addiction (Daley, 1987; Hawkins & Fraser, 1987; Miller, 1992; Zackson, 1985). Adding weak and poor communication to the mix, as well as limited interaction between parents and children, may lead to higher tendency to drug addiction (Mohd. Taib et al., 2000). Close family support, strong family relationship and positive family behavior, as well as consistent engagement may well save the younger generation from drug addiction problem (Budhathoki, et al., 2006). However, a family environment that gives too much leniency to their children can also trigger drug addiction among their children (Maehira, 2013).

Countless initiatives have been carried out by the authorities in providing skills and vocational training to help them survive independently by working on their own through the skills they acquired. Education, knowledge, and vocational skills are necessary in order for one to gain employment (Atkinson et al., 2001). Skills training may help a person to improve their self esteem which would then affect them positively. Siti Marziah et al (2018) maintains that an addict requires not only rehabilitative treatment to help them recover from addiction, but also skills training to help them in various fields of work once the recovery period is over.

### ***Socio-Economy Factor***

Socio-economics are directly linked to the employment sector, whereas employment are linked to drug addiction. Harrington and Harrington (2002), states that a person will do a task because there is a need for it and this need will strengthen the behavior in order to fulfil the need., as well as a sense of responsibility towards ones family (Leana & Feldman, 1995).

According to Zlotnick (2002); Mazerolle (2004), those who receives financial assistance and daily necessities are less interested in working. A person performs a task out of the prospect of obtaining a meaningful result (Connor & Sparks, 1999) and thus form a more stable attitude (Ajzen, 2001). Findings from Hergenrather (2004) conclude that 85% of informants believe that working can result in positive outcomes because it adds value to life.

Zlotnick's study found that out of 384 employed informants, the employment ratio among homeless drug addicts are 51.3% male and 37.5% female. Bray (2000) however found that drug addiction are closely linked to low employment rate. This indicates that the socio-economic status of addicts is usually low.

Aside from that, drug addiction affects law enforcements expenses and treatment as well as rehabilitation cost where these cost are either direct or explicit. Implicit cost caused by drug abuse on the other hand are lost work time and loss of productivity (Groose, 1990). A study by MacCoun et al (1996) found that the level of laxity of laws pertaining to drug prevention, use and distribution of drugs impact the number and type of people involved, health conditions, the burden on the enforcement systems of drugs, crimes or violence, and disease transmission. This impact can manifest in a monetary or non-monetary terms. In monetary terms, a vivid example is the fines collected, as well as cost for treatment and rehabilitation. This financial effect can be measured by studying the degree of fear of crimes that leads to drug related offence prevention expenses. In non-monetary sense, the effects are the violation of individual liberties, the fear of arrest, and awareness of civil unrest. In general, both of this impacts are complex and cannot be measured accurately. However, this matter have a grave impact on socio-economics.

### ***Environment Factor***

Mayes and Suchan (2006); Hayes et al (2004) states that children who grew up in high-risk environment are more susceptible to criminal activities (e.g., making, buying, and distributing illicit drugs); witnessing drug abuse (including injectables) and became familiar and comfortable with drug-related paraphernalia. The rate of substance abuse are also very high among teenagers who are homeless or have non-permanent residency, as well as teenagers living in a single parent households, studies found (Oman et al., 2004). They are exposed to difficult and marginalized lives. , with some of them are also a victim of physical and sexual abuse. This stressful environment, according to Wolfe and ash (2006); Kirisci et al (2005), eventually leads to a greater chance of developing substance abuse and psychosocial problems. From a personality point of view, as deliberated in Maturation Theory of Substance Use by Haley & Baryza (1990), substance abuse in childhood is a result of stress and distress in their home environment that leads to them resorting to substance use in order to control their behavior (Wolfe & Mash, 2006). The above-mentioned environmental and sociodemographic context validated that most addicts have a low level of education, do not have regular jobs, and are unemployed (Rafidah, 2007).

There are a variety of factor that drives teenager into this negative activity. The theories presented shows that when a teenager are exposed to too many risk factors, they are more than likely to become delinquent (Turner et al., 2009). These behavioral disorder can be identified in a high risk social environment, as well as school environment that interacted with other factors to influence deviant behavior (Farrel & Flannery, 2005). This demonstrates that environmental factors are among the strong factors that contributes to risk of drug addiction.

Upon closer examination on past studies, it is clear that cross cultural comparisons are absent in the studies of drug addiction among the Malay and Chinese. Therefore, this study

are critical in order to pioneer and explore the reasoning behind the huge gap in number of Malay in rehabilitation centre compared to the Chinese, when their population in general are numerous at 6.5 million.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework of this study are closely linked o issue of drug addiction in Malaysia. Drug addiction is an act of an individual who are dependant on drugs. Among the element that can be considered in the matter of addiction is the method of consumption, types of drug abused (traditional and synthetic), source of acquiring the drugs, and method of acquiring the drugs.this study also looked byond the cross cultural factors of drug addiction, i.e. pertaining to the Malay and Chinese of Malaysia.

The selection of the two ethnicities are based on statistics from NADA that indicates the two group make up the majority of drug addict in Malaysia. This study therefore sought to elucidate the factor that contribute to the tendency of drug addict among the Malay and Chinese. The four major factors expected to influence the tendency of drug addiction are: Religion, socio-cultural construct, socio-economic construct, as well as environmental construct. Therein, each conctruct are followed by several sub construct. For the religion construct, the sub construct are morality, philosophy of life, and practice for socio-cultural construct, the sub construct are education, family culture, custom and lifestyle. Socio-economic construct are represented by standard of living of family, for environment, the sub construct are community, peers, self, family and residence.

### **Conclusion**

The country's drug abuse problem is worsening over time, and it will be impossible to address it without a concerted effort from all members of the community. According to statistics from NADA, the Malays make up the majority of drug addict, followed by the Chinese. To date, there are no cross cultural studies that address addicts from both Malay and Chinese community. Therefore, this concept paper may help in unravelling the factor of drug addiction for both ethnicities based on he four construct (religions, socio-cultural, socio-economics, and environment).

This study are expected to help contribute and assist all related parties, especially the National Anti Drug Agency (NADA), as well as other agenciest hat handled addiction to better understand and manage this problem systematically towards a more affective actions. The result of this study also contributed to the database and provide a valuable input to help drug addicts in Malaysia. This is because studies pertaining to the Chinese addict in Malaysia has not been conducted yet.

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