Social Group Related Entry Participation Motivations for Continuing Professional Development Activities Among Malaysian Registered Quantity Surveyors

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Abstract: Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is aimed at continually updating Malaysian quantity surveying professionals' knowledge to help them adapt to changes and challenges in the Malaysian construction industry. Proof of such participation is now a condition for the renewal of quantity surveying practice licences with the Board of Quantity Surveyors Malaysia. This article describes the findings of the qualitative research phase of a research into CPD entry participation motivations of Malaysian registered quantity surveyors. The analysis method of the interview transcripts of 31 registered quantity surveyors combined content analysis and grounded theory analysis. This analysis generated seven motivation themes regarding participation in CPD activities. The influence of the social group underlie five of these motivation themes, that are professional and geographical isolation, professional belonging, "balancing" of obligations, racial group orientations, and social participation in voluntary associations. It is proposed that further research in group influences on entry participation motivations for CPD activities be done.

Keywords: Continuing professional development, Entry participation motivations, Registered quantity surveyors Malaysia, Qualitative research method

INTRODUCTION

According to David and Foray (2002) and OECD (1996), there is a global shift towards a knowledge-based economy where knowledge is a core economic resource that is as important as the traditional resources, e.g., money, natural resources, to drive economic growth. The quantity surveyor's expertise is generally derived from the application of specialised knowledge obtained from tertiary education. Yet, quantity surveyors world-wide are urged to continuously develop themselves professionally and thus be fully updated, be more competitive, able to meet the expectations of increasingly sophisticated and demanding clients and develop a new paradigm in facing the future challenges to the profession. They also have to expand their knowledge and skills to take advantage of new areas and opportunities that arise from developments such as the trend of globalised open trade, changing economic policies and pervasive use of information and

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communication technologies (Langston, 1996/1997; Ling, 1996; Kharb, 2000; Rahman, 1999; Ismail and Samad, 1999).

The term "continuing professional development" is used to describe the continuing development efforts of professionals to meet these challenges. These efforts generally involve learning new knowledge and skills, and updating existing knowledge and skills. It is a form of adult education albeit for highly-educated individuals. Thus, a well accepted definition of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is "the systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skill and the development of personal qualities necessary for the execution of professional and technical duties throughout the practitioner's working life" (PARN, 2000; BQSM, 2000). In 2001, the Board of Quantity Surveyors Malaysia imposed a new policy on CPD. Malaysian Registered Quantity Surveyors were mandated to show proof of CPD activity participation as one of the conditions for annual re-registration. The implementation of this policy is one of many proactive steps taken by the quantity surveying profession to counter the challenges facing it.

The CPD requirement requires a minimum level of annual participation (in the form of credit hours) in accredited CPD activities by each registered quantity surveyor. Providers or organisers of accredited CPD activities can neither guarantee a captive group of participants nor profits because there are many other accredited and non-accredited CPD activities to choose from. The major provider of accredited CPD activities for the registered quantity surveyors is the Institution of Surveyors Malaysia (ISM). If the accredited CPD activities continuously generate poor attendance, the sustainability of the CPD programme of the quantity surveying profession is jeopardized. Uncovering the reasons for and deterrents to their CPD participation would help provide insights for attracting more participation whether such actions are voluntary or due to compulsion.

RESEARCH QUESTION

This study is a follow-up to an exploratory study that investigated the similarity of reasons and deterrents to those cited by findings conducted in mostly Western studies (findings reported in Ariffin and Torrance, 2003). In this study, a qualitative approach using interviews was chosen. Thus, the research question was: "What are the underlying motivational issues behind the reasons for and deterrents to the entry participation of Malaysian registered quantity surveyors in CPD activities?" The findings are not intended to provide generalisations, but to provide a deeper understanding of the CPD entry participation motivations of a chosen group of Malaysian registered

quantity surveyors throughout Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak.

Entry participation refers to the motivation of a person to enter into the educational activity (Pieters, 1994; Simpson, 1997). Reasons for CPD participation refer to the "personal factors that contribute to the motivational state" (Cervero, 1988) of the adult to participate in a continuing professional development activity. Deterrents to participation refer to "factors...[that negatively] influence the level of motivation..." (Cervero, 1988) of a person to enter into a CPD activity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several theoretical models attempt to explain and even predict the participation of adults in education. The models include Boshier's (1973) Congruency model, the Lifespan Developmental Psychology group of models (Havighurst, 1973; Aslanian and Brickell, 1980), Rubenson's (1977) Expectance-Valence model, Cross's (1981) Chain of Response model, Darkenwald and Merriam's (1982) Psychological Interaction model, and Cookson's (1986) ISSTAL model. Other models that appeared in 1990s are the Courtney's (1992) social participation model, Blair and McPake's (1995) Goal-Conditions interaction model, Van Damme's (1999) Strategic Behaviour model, and Sissel's (1997) Participation-Learning Dynamics model. Although the research on participation motivation in adult professional education has continued such as that by Murphy et al. (2006), Flynn (2006) and Marriott et al. (2007), the validity of theories has not been comprehensively proven. These theories have a common basis in that they are built upon motivations arising from the cognitive interaction of the self and the environment. Some of these theories implied the influence of the ongoing life transitions and some implied the role of decision making. The numerous theories and the lack of a single comprehensive model posits motivation as having numerous constructs and, hence, being difficult to explain comprehensively (Cross, 1981; Courtney, 1992; McGivney, 1993; Deshler, 1994; Tight, 1996; Merriam and Caffarella, 1999). One common approach to studying entry participation motivations involves the quantitative studies of the motivation drivers (reasons) and demotivators (deterrents) (Courtney, 1992; Ariffin, 2005). Thus, this study was approached from a perspective of motivation as a continuum where complete motivation drive is at one end and complete demotivation is at the other. The qualitative evaluation of the reasons and deterrents was chosen as the research method to provide a new understanding of the entry participation motivations of registered quantity surveyors into CPD activities.

RESEARCH METHOD

The preceding study to this study was a postal survey conducted on the population (n = 734) of Malaysian registered quantity surveyors. The findings of 147 survey respondents (reported in Ariffin and Torrance, 2003) helped generate the relevant interview questions for this study. Both open-ended and close-ended interview questions were designed. The open-ended questions elicited detailed explanations for the participation or non-participation of the interviewees in CPD activities. Close-ended questions were aimed at providing information on 12 contextual characteristics of the interviewee, i.e., gender, race, marital status, geographical location, nature of work employment, type of work organisation, nature of practice, attitude to practice, career stage, degree of participation in the activities of the ISM, and degree of participation in other social activities. The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed to ensure that the data was valid. A guarantee of confidentiality was also given to the interviewees to encourage them to talk freely without fear.

Potential interviewees were chosen by purposive sampling (as defined by Schwandt, 2001) from the pool of 73 respondents in the first phase who had provided their telephone numbers and addresses, thus allowing them to be contacted for permission to be interviewed. The sampling was based on four contextual variables, i.e., geographical location, nature of practice, gender and race. The interview questions were pre-tested (as recommended by Mason, 1996) with the first three interviewees. Data gathering were stopped after 34 interviews were done because theoretical saturation had been reached. Table 1 provides the profiles of the interviewees.

DATA ANALYSIS

The three pretest interviews caused some refinements to interview questions and protocol for the subsequent interviews. Transcripts of the audio recordings of the interviews except the three pretest interviews, were analysed using a modified form of reiterative analysis that combined the grounded theory analysis (as recommended by Strauss and Corbin, 1998) with content analysis. Figure 1 provides the flow chart of this process.

Table 1. Profile of Interviewees.

Interviewee no.	Gender	Race	Geographical location	Nature of practice
1	Female	Malay	East	Government employee (local authority)
2	Male	Malay	East	Private firm employee (utilities)
3	Female	Malay	North	QS consulting firm owner
4	Male	Malay	North	QS Consulting firm owner
5	Male	Chinese	North	Contractor firm employee
6	Male	Chinese	North	QS Consulting firm owner
7	Male	Malay	East	QS Consulting firm owner
8	Male	Malay	Central	Government employee (university lecturer)
9	Male	Malay	Central	Contractor firm employee
10	Female	Malay	South	Private firm employee (utilities)
11	Male	Chinese	Sarawak	Consulting firm owner
12	Male	Chinese	Sarawak	Consulting firm owner
13	Male	Chinese	South	QS Consulting firm owner
14	Female	Chinese	Sarawak	Contractor firm employee
15	Female	Malay	North	Government employee (contractor registration manager)
16	Female	Malay	South	Government employee (university lecturer)
17	Female	Malay	Sarawak	QS Consulting firm owner
18	Male	Malay	Central	QS Consulting firm owner
19	Male	Chinese	Central	QS Consulting firm owner
20	Female	Chinese	Central	QS Consulting firm owner
21	Female	Malay	Sarawak	Government employee (trainer/public works)
22	Male	Chinese	Sarawak	QS Consulting firm owner
23	Male	Non-Malay indigenous	Sabah	Government employee (public works)
24	Male	Chinese	Sabah	QS Consulting firm owner
25	Male	Chinese	Sabah	QS Consulting firm owner
26	Male	Chinese	North	QS Consulting firm owner
27	Male	Malay	Central	QS Consulting firm owner
28	Female	Malay	Central	Private firm employee (utilities)
29	Female	Malay	Central	Government employee (local authority)
30	Male	Chinese	Central	QS Consulting firm owner
31	Male	Chinese	Central	Contractor firm employee

Note: Central region : Kuala Lumpur city, states of Selangor and Negeri Sembilan   Eastern region : States of Pahang, Terengganu and Kelantan
North region   : States of Perlis, Kedah, Pulau Pinang and Perak   Sabah region : State of Sabah
South region   : States of Melaka and Johor   Sarawak region : State of Sarawak

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        ┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
        │       RAW DATA (TRANSCRIPTS)         │
        └─────────────────────────────────────┘

              CONTENT ANALYSIS
              AND OPEN CODING

  ┌──────────────────┐          ┌──────────────────┐
  │  REASONS ITEMS   │          │ DETERRENT ITEMS  │
  └──────────────────┘          └──────────────────┘

  ┌──────────────────┐  AXIAL   ┌──────────────────────┐
  │ REASONS CATEGORIES│ CODING  │ DETERRENT CATEGORIES │
  └──────────────────┘          └──────────────────────┘

        ┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
        │ HIERARCHY OF REASON AND DETERRENT    │
        │            CATEGORIES                 │
        │   (Quantitative Ranking Tables)      │
        └─────────────────────────────────────┘

        ┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
        │ CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF CATEGORIES    │
        │     (Contextual Matrix Tables)       │
        └─────────────────────────────────────┘

              SELECTIVE CODING

        ┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
        │ ANALYSIS AND GENERATION OF THEMES    │
        │     (Mind Mapping Diagrams)          │
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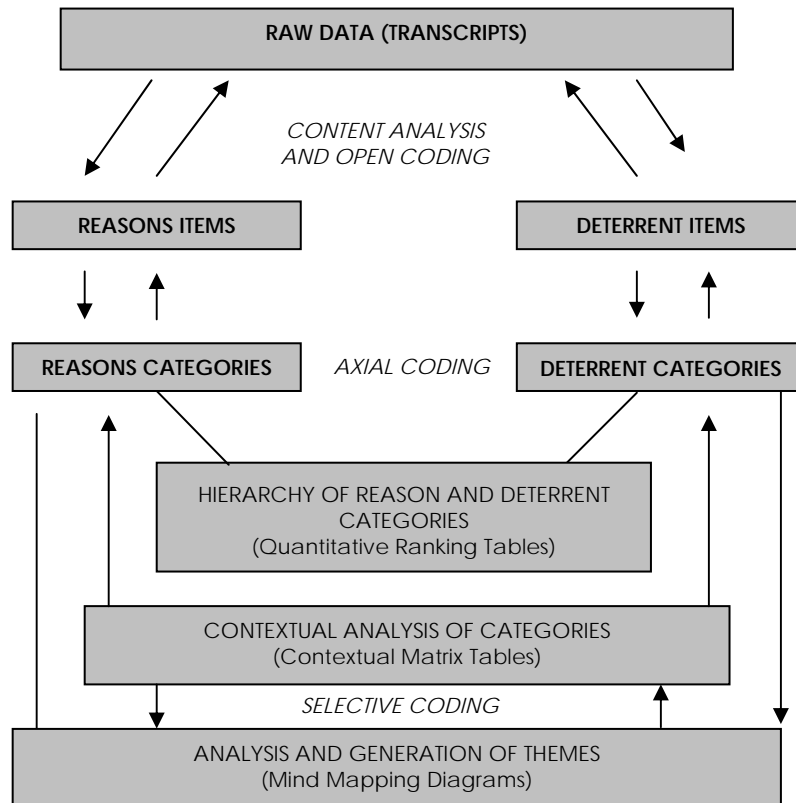
Figure 1. Flow Chart of the Combined
"Content Analysis-Grounded Theory" Method of Analysis.

The transcripts were content analysed first and produced 73 reasons for and 49 deterrents to CPD participation. These numerous reasons and deterrents were reduced into 19 reason categories (see Table 2) and 13 deterrent categories (see Table 3) to CPD participation. A reiterative process of grounded theory coding procedures then generated seven themes of CPD participation motivations and the one issue that underlie five of these themes. The reiterative process used contextual matrix tables, quantitative ranking tables and mind-mapping diagrams to help obtain the findings. The tables interconnected the categories with respect to interviewees' contexts. The quantitative ranking tables help focus on the prevalent categories. The diagrams helped clarify the emerging data patterns.

Qualitative approaches depend on inductive rather than deductive analytical methods (Creswell, 2003). To ensure rigor, the inductive analysis findings were reviewed by three non-quantity surveying lecturers, one of whom was familiar with qualitative research methods. In addition, the practice of reconfirming the researcher's under-standing of the responses with the interviewees throughout the conduct of the interviews was adapted.

Table 2. Definitions of Reasons Categories Generated.

No.	Reason Category	Definition (Nature of motivation to participate)	No. of persons citing reasons in this category
1	Professional knowledge	To seek knowledge that his/her needs to have to perform his/her professional duties to a satisfactory level for his/her present and future work.	31
2	Professional service	To obtain abilities to cater to the desires of his/her client or employer to a satisfactory level in the conduct of his /her professional duties.	28
3	Collegial learning	To engage in group learning e.g., learning through other professionals' experiences, discussion and exchanges of ideas.	28
4	Advancement of the profession	To contribute to the advancement of his/her profession in the industry.	25
5	Social interaction	To have social interactions and relationships.	25
6	Compulsion	To meet the requirement of employer or professional licensing body.	24
7	Benefit	Able to obtain optimal benefits from the CPD participation.	24
8	Preparing for the future	To prepare for his/her work and personal lives in the future.	24
9	Disposition to learning	Natural inclination to participate in learning activities such as CPD activities.	23
10	Interest	Personal interest on the subject or topic of the CPD activity.	17
11	Professional motivation	Ability to enhance professional motivation and self-confidence in the subject, regarding the personal practice and knowledge related to the profession.	18
12	Support	Availability of support by the employer, work colleagues, subordinates or family members to undertake his/her obligations or duties while he/she participates in CPD activities.	15
13	Method of learning	Method or delivery of CPD activity meets his/her preferences.	11
14	Accessibility	Adequate degree of accessibility to the CPD activity in terms of location and opportunity.	10
15	Release	Possibility of releasing the subject from the tedium of work or work pressure.	10
16	Flexibility	Possibilities of being able to fit in other outside activities with the CPD activities.	7
17	Job security	To ensure his/her job security as an employee.	6
18	Professional collegiality	To get fellowship with other quantity surveyors that reinforces his/her identity as a member of the community of professional quantity surveyors.	6
19	Professional recognicition	To have his/her professional contributions or his profession to be recognised by relevant other persons within society.	4

Table 3. Definitions of Generated Deterrent Categories.

No.	Deterrent Category	Definition (Source of reduction of participation motivation)	No. of persons citing deterrents in this category
1	Cost	Issues concerning monetary cost of participation in CPD activities.	27
2	Work	Issues concerning demands of their work, job and/or clients.	23
3	Bad experience	Issues concerning poor experiences from previous participation of CPD activities.	19
4	Lack of information	Issues concerning insufficient, late or inaccessibility to information on upcoming CPD activities.	15
5	Lack of benefit	Issues concerning perceived lack of benefit from participating in an upcoming CPD activity.	15
6	Disengagement	Issues concerning overall lack of interest in CPD activities.	14
7	Time	Issues concerning the lack of time for participating in CPD activities.	14
8	Family	Issues concerning obligations and responsibilities to their immediate and/or extended family.	13
9	Bad publicity	Issues concerning negative information received from other people or mass media.	13
10	Lack of institutional support	Issues concerning the insufficient or unavailability of support from other family members, work colleagues and employers in terms of either financial aid, physical help or emotional support.	11
11	Travel	Issues concerning travel to the venue of the CPD activity.	10
12	Clash with other activities	Issues concerning the clash of social or personal activities (excluding work and family obligations) with an upcoming CPD activity.	6
13	Alternative CPD available	Issues concerning the availability of more attractive or more convenient alternatives to participating in an upcoming CPD activity that provide either the same or better professional development.	4

FINDINGS

Two types of findings are reported in this section. The first finding is about the reason and deterrent categories. The second type of findings consists of social group related motivational themes. The transcripts were in Malaysian colloquial English. Ad verbatim excerpts from the transcripts provided in this article were amended for clarity but without change in the message.

Reason and Deterrent Categories

There were 19 participation reason categories and 13 participation deterrent categories that were generated from the content analysis and open coding of the transcripts. The definitions of these categories are given in Tables 1 and 2. These categories were vital to generate the second type of findings.

Themes

From the seven themes that emerged from the analysis, five were social group related. Scott and Marshall (2005) defined the social group as "a number of individuals, defined by formal or informal criteria of membership, who share a feeling of unity or are bound together by relatively stable patterns of interaction." The social group was found to be a common underlying issue in five themes. The social groups were the quantity surveying profession, the work organisation, the racial group and the family. The five themes are professional and geographical isolation, professional belonging, "balancing" of obligations, racial group orientations and social participation. The other two themes that were not social related were the pursuit of professional knowledge within cost and work constraints, and relevance of contents. These two themes are not elaborated in this paper.

The first social related theme refers to the isolation felt by some of the interviewees from a geographical and professional perspective. The geographical isolation is less evident than the work-related isolation. Only the interviewees in the East Peninsular Malaysia region indicated reasons that showed a strong sense of geographical isolation from the practice mainstream of the quantity surveying profession. These interviewees were in Kelantan and Terengganu that are traditionally outside of the political and economic mainstream of Peninsular Malaysia. At the time of the interviews, an opposition political party governed the two states. Economic development in these two states was relatively slow.

…basically the construction industry is always developing. In Kelantan, we are not exposed to the latest technology and construction methods. So, in Kuala Lumpur or other city centres, these things are way ahead. With CPD we are exposed to the latest construction technologies…

Interviewee no. 7

Professional isolation was evident among the interviewees who were either working as employees or having work functions where expertise in quantity surveying is secondary. The content of CPD activities that are sanctioned by the Board of Surveyors Malaysia are often related to knowledge relevant to those who are primarily practicing quantity surveying. The Registered Quantity Surveyor who practices in a quantity surveying consultant firm was viewed as being the "true" quantity surveying practitioner. Hence, the sharing of experiences by these self-employed consultants at CPD activities allowed the non-consultant registered quantity surveyors to maintain their "true" quantity surveying knowledge.

The isolation theme seems to reflect the influence of occupational socialisation. An interviewee would feel a sense of professional isolation due to reduced opportunities to social interactions with others that are related to his/her profession. According to Kendall (2002), it is through these interactions that he/she could maintain a professional self-identity and obtain mental, physical and social skills for survival in his or her profession.

…What I am doing now is not directly relevant to my profession. When I was in Organization X, yes, the work was relevant. I handled projects from A to Z, pre-contract to post-contract etc. Now I am seconded here to a different government body…dealing with registration of contractors. So, I don't handle projects. I miss out a lot with the professional practice of a QS… I am left behind…Sometimes when we do something outside of the profession, we tend to "drift away," we are really in the non-quantity surveying line. We sometimes get demotivated…Sometimes I feel that I want to leave the QS line… If we attend CPD activities, we will feel that we still love the QS profession and to be acknowledged as a QS…

Interviewee no. 15

The second theme evident among the interviewees is the feelings of professional belonging. The desire to socially interact with fellow quantity surveyors, the importance placed on learning from practitioners of the same profession and the drive to advance the quantity surveying profession through the participation in CPD activities are manifestations of this sense of belonging. Many writers such as Schein (1972) have suggested that this collective orientation is a characteristic of many professions.

This sense of professional belonging is also associated with the sense of "isolation" mentioned earlier. The gathering of quantity surveyors in CPD activities allowed those who felt professionally or geographically "isolated" to keep pace with the perceived "true" quantity surveying practices. It also generated renewed professional motivation in some of them.

The third theme that emerged is that of the continuing balancing of the interviewees' obligations to family, professional and employer with their individual desires for CPD participation. Interviewees who were female were prone to face the dilemma between CPD participation and family obligations. Women face conflicting demands from family obligations and the other two obligations. Malaysian working women tend to hold most of the child-rearing responsibilities due to cultural and religious norms (Omar, 2003; Ong and Sieh, 2003, Engineer, 2004). Child-rearing responsibilities are more time-consuming and unpredictable than the other responsibilities of the household. However, this is not to say that the women considered their work as unimportant. Nine out of the total of 11 female interviewees indicated "professional service" as a reason. Yet some interviewees solved their balancing act with the help of others.

…Family is no deterrent because I am staying with my parents. So, no, I am not 'leaving' my children alone…So far, CPD activity is not long in duration; it is just over in two days. That sort of time does not disturb me. You don't go there every week. At most, I go once a month. That is already a lot. Normally I delegate my work to my subordinates and my mobile phone line is always open…

Interviewee no. 1

Interviewees who were private sector employees were prone to face the dilemma between CPD participation and work. Their job security was less than that of employees in public organisations. Continued employment and job promotions could be enhanced if the private sector employee consistently shows that completion of work tasks had the highest priority. This theme is congruent with the phenomenon of work-family conflicts normally experienced by working persons with children (Kail and Cavanaugh, 2000).

In addition, these employees face conflicting desires for "true" quantity surveying knowledge versus the type of knowledge relevant to the organisations where they were employed. The employers of the interviewees tended to finance their participation in CPD activities that could provide organisational benefit rather than benefits that were individual or profession-specific. In addition,

employers also provided in-house training programmes that were more relevant to the employees' work. Thus, the interviewees would strategically choose CPD activities that were relevant to their work to appear unselfish and thus successfully gain their employers' sponsorship.

The fourth theme refers to the racial orientations towards such learning activities. Most of the indigenous population consists of Malays while the majority of the immigrant races are Chinese. The Malays dominate the government, civil service and agricultural sectors while the Chinese traditionally dominate the more lucrative commercial and professional sectors. Participation reasons and deterrents seemed to vary according to the race of the interviewee. The Chinese interviewees had more work-related reasons and deterrents while most Malay interviewees offered reasons and deterrents that were family and socially oriented.

…We have CPD activities during working hours. So it clashes more with work than anything else…

Chinese interviewee no. 14

…Let's say that I miss attending a CPD activity and I have another one available another time, I will go for family. Let's say that someone with expertise…give a talk. It is not certain if he will repeat his talk here again this year or next year. Then I will go…But I make sure that once the talk is

over, I immediately leave for home. I have to compensate to my family for the lost time…

Malay Interviewee no. 8

However, it must be noted that only two female and a male Chinese interviewees were private sector employees while the rest were self employed. The Malay interviewees were a mix of the self-employed and employees. There were very few non-Malays or non-Chinese in the population of registered quantity surveyors and only one (a non-Malay indigenous person) was interviewed.

This theme may reflect the prevalent economic activities of the two races concerned. Most Chinese work in the private sector and the entry of large numbers of Malays into the business and professional occupations is a relatively recent phenomenon. The tendency to be work-biased by the Chinese interviewees may stem from the lack of livelihood security in the private sector. Furthermore, the hardship the Malaysian Chinese experienced as immigrants and minority groups are believed to have reshaped their value orientation towards becoming more venturesome, money-driven and adaptable (Idris, 2008). The study by Low et al. (2008) on masculinity of East Asians indicated that the Malaysian males rated family and wealth highly as signs of masculinity. It implies that

Malaysian males value family and work. As mentioned earlier, the female interviewees faced stronger conflicts regarding meeting the obligations to their families, employers and profession. In addition, Malay interviewees who are owner-operators of consulting firms have less family related motivations than their Malay counterparts who were employees. Thus, it also implies that the Chinese interviewees were not only work-oriented in their participation motivations but also highly value their family and societal ties as much as the Malays. The following excerpts by two consultants illustrate this.

> We consultants spend so much time on work...We actually work hard for the family. If they go with me (on a holiday while I go) to CPD activities that are out of town, they will at least understand why I am so busy.
>
> Malay interviewee no. 7

> Family is not a problem but it depends. There must be someone looking after your kids. My mother helps look after my kids, so I don't feel there is pressure.
>
> Chinese interviewee no. 11

The last theme is social participation in voluntary associations. The professional association of the quantity surveyors is ISM. Membership is voluntary upon the population of Malaysian quantity surveyors. The analysis of the distribution of reasons and deterrents in the context of the degree of participation in ISM activities indicated that generally, the more active the interviewee was in ISM activities, the less deterrents to participation indicated by him or her. However, those who had either an average or below average degree of participation in ISM activities seemed to be "forced" to attend CPD activities.

However, non-membership and low degrees of participation did not indicate that the interviewees with such characteristics had substantially different participation reasons than the other groups. Two interviewees who were non-members of ISM indicated reasons that reflected many reason categories of all the interviewees. The interviewees who were members but had a very low degree of participation in ISM activities also shared almost similar reasons with the "non-members" group.

Interviewees who were non-members had fewer deterrents than those who were ISM members. The two non-member interviewees shared similar "work," "time constraints," and "lack of information" deterrents. Being non-members of ISM, they had the disadvantage of being less informed about upcoming CPD activities by ISM. Active participation in ISM provides opportunities to be better informed about the CPD activities prior to receiving the printed advertisements or brochures. The professional association is one of the major providers of CPD activities.

…sometimes people are not aware of the upcoming CPD activity. The organisers don't send information about the CPD activity to you. Sometimes, they send you the write-up on the proposed CPD activity that is very brief… it is nothing much, so you don't attend. It is very important. If they give you a synopsis, you could roughly know if it is good…

Interviewee no. 26

One interviewee was part of the leadership in ISM. Not only was he actively involved in CPD activities organised by ISM but he was also active in other voluntary associations. According to Babchuk and Courtney (1995), persons who are predisposed to participation in adult education (PAE) are more likely to be members of voluntary associations. Both PAE and voluntary association membership are deemed as closely related forms of social participation. Thus, if the number of deterrents is indicative of a predisposition to CPD participation, then this theme suggests an additional factor that impact on the association between voluntary membership and that predisposition. This is the level of active participation in activities of such associations. An active member in the association is more likely to be predisposed to CPD participation. However, it must be noted that the Board of Quantity Surveyors Malaysia considers several forms of non-ISM activities (e.g., reading) as *bona fide* CPD activities.

The social participation theme is concurrent with Courtney's (1992) social participation model that proposes the propensity to participate in organised public life as greatly influencing the amount of PAE. However, this model did not strongly consider the influence that an individual's simultaneous membership in various social groups has upon his participation in adult education such as CPD activities.

DISCUSSION

The themes emerging from the analysis were pursuit of professional knowledge within cost and work constraints, relevance, professional and geographical isolation, professional belonging, "balancing" of obligations, racial group orientations, and social participation. It would appear that social group is the common element among the latter five of the seven themes. These five themes suggest the influence of the social group on participation motivations of adults. The underlying social groups in the findings are the profession group, the work group, the race group and the family group. The needs theories of motivation by Alderfer (1969) and Maslow (1954) had proposed that need for affiliation or relatedness is one of several major needs that motivate a person's behaviour. Membership in social groups is a manifestation of this affiliation need.

The findings suggest that entry participation motivations arise out of the cohort's "obligations" to the four above-mentioned social groups. However, the obligations of each group conflict with each other. Thus, the theme of "balancing" of obligations is evident throughout the profession, work, race, and the family groups. The other themes are only relevant to one or more groups. The themes of pursuit of professional knowledge within cost and work constraints, relevance, professional and geographical isolation, professional belonging and social participation reflect the "obligations" to the profession group. The work group refers to the organisation the person works in. The person may either be the employer who is responsible for his subordinates or an employee who works with his superior, peers and subordinates. The work group related "obligations" are evident from the themes of pursuit of professional knowledge within cost and work constraints, relevance and professional isolation. The theme of professional isolation is relevant to the race group because the registered quantity surveyors who are employed with the public section are mostly Malays and tend to look for knowledge of "true quantity surveying practices" from the ones in the private sector which is dominated by their Chinese counterparts.

It is reiterated that the findings of this study cannot be generalised for the population of Malaysian registered quantity surveyors due to the qualitative approach used.

However, it does provide evidence to propose that entry CPD participation reasons and deterrents of Malaysian registered quantity surveyors overlay social group related motivations. The groups to which the individual belong exert tremendous influence upon the individual's choices, behaviours and psychology. An individual is a member of many groups in life such as the family, friends, work colleagues, internet network etc. (Anderson and Taylor, 2006; Aronson et al., 2006). In addition, group influence on Malaysian is strong, considering that Eastern societies are collectivist *vis-à-vis* the Westerners' tendency to individualism (Hofstede, 1984; Triandis, 1995). Courtney's (1992) social participation model proposes that the propensity to participate in organised public life as greatly influencing the amount of participation of adults in educational activities. However, this model did not strongly consider the influence an individual's simultaneous membership in various social groups has upon his participation in adult education such as CPD activities. Thus, further quantitative studies on group influenced CPD participation motivations of these cohorts and other groups of licensed professionals need to be done to further validate the findings of this study.

From a practical perspective, the efforts of relevant authorities to encourage better CPD participation among Malaysian registered quantity surveyors may have to consider encouraging potential participants to enroll in

their professional association (ISM) thus enhancing the professional group's influence upon participation motivations. To help meet participants' obligations to their families and employers or clients, the CPD providers may hold CPD activities such as distance learning, short in-house talks etc. that enable the participants to easily attend to work or family if the need arises. Another possible facilitation is tax deductions to employers to compensate for loss of the services of their employees who attend CPD activities.

CONCLUSION

The findings from the qualitative analysis of interviews among 31 Malaysian registered quantity surveyors provide a proposition that social group related motivations underlie the reasons for and deterrents to entry participation of Malaysian registered quantity surveyors in CPD activities. These are the profession, work, race and family groups. The social group related motivation themes are professional and geographical isolation, professional belonging, "balancing" of life activities, racial group orientations, and social participation. These themes seem related to the conflicting "obligations" that a registered quantity surveyor

has to these groups. It would appear that Courtney's (1992) social participation model to explain adults' entry participation into educational activities can be improved by including group influences. It is suggested that further research in group influences on entry participation motivations for CPD activities be done.

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