Service Quality and Leadership in Public Preschool Education in Malaysia

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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DECLARATION

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; and the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics, procedures and guidelines have been followed.

Farah Laili Muda Ismail

August 2013
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CONFERENCE PAPERS ORIGINATING FROM THE PRESENT THESIS


TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION......................................................................................................................... ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ............................................................................................................ iii
DEDICATION............................................................................................................................ iv
CONFERENCE PAPERS ORIGINATING FROM THE PRESENT THESIS .........................v
TABLE OF CONTENTS ............................................................................................................ vi
LIST OF TABLES.......................................................................................................................... xiii
LIST OF FIGURES...................................................................................................................... xvi
ABSTRACT............................................................................................................................... xvii
CHAPTER ONE .......................................................................................................................... 1
INTRODUCTION ......................................................................................................................... 1
  1.1 Introduction.......................................................................................................................... 1
  1.2 The growth of preschool education in Malaysia............................................................... 3
  1.3 Issues to be analysed in this study.................................................................................... 7
  1.4 The background of the study............................................................................................ 9
  1.5 The need for this study...................................................................................................... 11
  1.6 The structure of the study................................................................................................ 12
    1.6.1 Qualitative method.................................................................................................... 14
    1.6.2 Quantitative method.................................................................................................. 15
  1.7 Data analysis.................................................................................................................... 16
  1.8 The structure of the thesis............................................................................................... 16
  1.9 The contributions of the study........................................................................................ 17
  1.10 Summary......................................................................................................................... 18
CHAPTER TWO .......................................................................................................................... 19
BACKGROUND OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA........................................ 19
  2.1 Introduction....................................................................................................................... 19
2.2 Agencies providing public preschool education

2.2.1 Jabatan Kemajuan Masyarakat (KEMAS) or Community Development Department

2.2.2 Jabatan Perpaduan Negara (PERPADUAN) or Department of National Unity

2.2.3 Ministry of Education

2.2.4 Selangor State Islamic Religion Department

2.3 Differences and similarities of the agencies

2.4 Summary

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Service quality in education

3.3 Service quality in preschool education

3.4 Measurement of preschool quality

3.5 School leadership

3.6 Links between service quality and school leadership

3.7 Summary

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Research problems

4.2 Methods used in the qualitative phase

4.2.1 The semi-structured interviews

4.2.2 Photo analysis

4.2.3 The planning of the semi-structured interviews

4.2.3.1 Sampling process
4.2.3.2 Instrument .................................................................62
4.2.3.3 Interview process .......................................................62
4.2.3.4 Analysing the data........................................................64
4.2.3.5 Data presentation .......................................................66
4.3 Quantitative approach ......................................................66
  4.3.1 Research structure .......................................................66
  4.3.2 Description of the sample and choice of data collection .........68
  4.3.3 Content of the instrument .............................................69
  4.3.4 Development of the instrument ......................................72
    4.3.4.1 Content validity ..................................................73
    4.3.4.2 Test on reliability ................................................74
    4.3.4.3 Test-retest analysis ..............................................78
  4.3.5 Data analysis .............................................................79
    4.3.5.1 The choice of analysis ...........................................79
    4.3.6 Methodology limitations ..........................................80
4.4 Summary ..........................................................................81

CHAPTER FIVE ...........................................................................82

FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS: FACTORS AFFECTING THE SERVICE QUALITY IN MALAYSIAN PRESCHOOL EDUCATION .........................................................82

  5.1 Introduction ......................................................................82
  5.2 Description of the participants ........................................82
  5.3 Interview questions ........................................................85
  5.4 The results ......................................................................85
    5.4.1 Perceptions of stakeholders .......................................88
5.4.1.1 Quality of teaching and learning.................................................................88
5.4.1.2 Quality of teachers .........................................................................................100
5.4.1.3 Quality of environment ...................................................................................115
5.4.1.4 Quality of facilities and equipment.................................................................122

5.5 Summary ..............................................................................................................130

CHAPTER SIX ........................................................................................................131

FINDINGS FROM SURVEYS: USING FACTOR ANALYSIS AND MULTIPLE
REGRESSION ANALYSIS ..............................................................................................131

6.1 Introduction .........................................................................................................131
6.2 Parents: Profile of the sample .............................................................................131
  6.2.1 Age...................................................................................................................131
  6.2.2 Gender, race and level of education.................................................................132
  6.2.3 Area of employment, household income and number of children..................133
6.3 Teachers: Profile of the sample .........................................................................134
  6.3.1 Age...................................................................................................................134
  6.3.2 Gender, race and level of education.................................................................135
  6.3.3 Work experience .............................................................................................136
6.4 Results ................................................................................................................136
  6.4.1 Extraction on service quality factors and leadership in preschool education ......136
    6.4.1.1 Service quality scale- Factor extraction .......................................................139
    6.4.1.2 Leadership scale- Factor extraction ............................................................147
  6.4.2 The relationship between service quality factors and leadership roles in preschool
      education ...............................................................................................................154
    6.4.2.1 Interpretation of output from standard multiple regression .......................156
      6.4.2.1.1 Checking the assumptions.....................................................................156
6.4.2.2 Results for hypotheses testing- The parents group .................................................. 158

6.4.2.2.1 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF SCHOOL VALUES and leadership roles in preschool education ................................................................. 158

6.4.2.2.2 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE and leadership roles in preschool education ...................................................... 160

6.4.2.2.3 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF SCHOOL ATMOSPHERE and leadership roles in preschool education .......................................................... 162

6.4.2.2.4 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING and leadership roles in preschool education ...................................................... 163

6.4.2.2.5 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF INTERACTION and leadership roles in preschool education ................................................................. 165

6.4.2.2.6 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF TEACHERS and leadership roles in preschool education ................................................................. 167

6.4.2.3 Results for hypotheses testing- The teachers group ............................................. 168

6.4.2.3.1 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF SCHOOL VALUES and leadership roles in preschool education ................................................................. 169

6.4.2.3.2 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF SCHOOL ATMOSPHERE and leadership roles in preschool education .......................................................... 170

6.4.2.3.3 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING and leadership roles in preschool education ...................................................... 172

6.4.2.3.4 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF TEACHERS and leadership roles in preschool education ................................................................. 173

6.4.2.3.5 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING FACILITIES and leadership roles in preschool education ............................. 175

6.5 Summary ..................................................................................................................... 176

CHAPTER SEVEN ............................................................................................................. 178

DISCUSSION ..................................................................................................................... 178

7.1 Introduction .................................................................................................................. 178
7.2 Factors contributing to service quality in public preschools in Malaysia..........................178

7.2.1 School values ..................................................................................................................180

7.2.1.1 English emphasis .......................................................................................................180

7.2.1.2 Islamic education .........................................................................................................182

7.2.1.3 Encouragement on multicultural integration ...............................................................183

7.2.2 Environmental safety and school ambience ....................................................................184

7.2.3 Health and positive wellbeing practices ..........................................................................185

7.2.4 Teachers ........................................................................................................................186

7.2.4.1 Academic qualification and teachers’ training ..............................................................187

7.2.4.2 Job engagement ..........................................................................................................188

7.2.5 Facilities ........................................................................................................................189

7.2.5.1 Teaching & learning materials and school infrastructures ..........................................189

7.2.6 School interactions and educational experience ............................................................190

7.3 Links between leadership roles in preschool education and preschool service quality ......191

7.4 Implications of the study....................................................................................................195

7.4.1 Implications on preschool service quality....................................................................195

7.4.2 Implications on leadership roles in preschool education ...............................................196

7.4.3 Contributions to theory .................................................................................................197

7.5 Recommendations for future research .............................................................................197

7.6 Conclusion ........................................................................................................................198

REFERENCES.........................................................................................................................200

Appendix A- Informed Consent...............................................................................................209

Appendix B1- Plain Language Statement (Interview)...............................................................211

Appendix B2- Plain Language Statement (Questionnaire Survey) ............................................214
Appendix C- Ethics Approval.................................................................217
Appendix D- Approval from Economic Planning Unit .................................219
Appendix E1- Interview Guide in English Language.....................................222
Appendix E2- Interview Guide in Malay Language.........................................223
Appendix F1- Questionnaire for parents in English Language .....................224
Appendix F2- Questionnaire for parents in Malay Language .........................230
Appendix F3- Questionnaire for teachers in English Language ....................236
Appendix F4- Questionnaire for teachers in Malay Language ........................242
LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1 Number of KEMAS preschool classes in year 1970-2011........................................22
Table 3.1 43 items organized into 7 subscales .................................................................39
Table 4.1 Studies on preschool service quality..................................................................66
Table 4.2 Studies on roles of school leadership.................................................................68
Table 4.3 Items in the service quality scale.................................................................71
Table 4.4 Items in the preschool leadership scale ............................................................72
Table 4.5 Variances and reliability values (Cronbach’s alpha) for the seven sub-scales in the Service Quality Scale ..................................................................................73
Table 4.6 Variances and reliability values (Cronbach’s alpha) for the five sub-scales in the Leadership Scale ..................................................................................................................73
Table 4.7 Correlations of test-retest analysis for Service Quality Scale (SQS) .................74
Table 4.8 Correlations of test-retest analysis for Leadership Scale (LS)..........................74
Table 5.1 Factors contributing to service quality from the point of view of stakeholders....80
Table 6.1 Age of parents.....................................................................................................125
Table 6.2 Sex of parents.....................................................................................................126
Table 6.3 Race/ethnicity of the parents.............................................................................126
Table 6.4 Level of education of the parents......................................................................127
Table 6.5 Area of employment of the parents .................................................................127
Table 6.6 Household income of the parents......................................................................128
Table 6.7 Number of children of the parents ....................................................................128
Table 6.8 Age of the teachers ...........................................................................................129
Table 6.9 Sex of the teachers ...........................................................................................129
Table 6.10 Race/ethnicity of the teachers ........................................................................129
Table 6.11 Level of education of the teachers

Table 6.12 Working experience of the teachers

Table 6.13 Descriptive statistics of the Scale Correlation Matrix for parents respondents

Table 6.14 Descriptive statistics of the Scale Correlation Matrix for teachers respondents

Table 6.15 Pattern Matrix for Service Quality Scale for parents group

Table 6.16 Pattern Matrix for Service Quality Scale for teachers group

Table 6.17 Six factors of Service Quality Aspects from parents’ views

Table 6.18 Five factors of Service Quality Aspects from teachers’ views

Table 6.19 Pattern Matrix for Leadership Scale for parents group

Table 6.20 Pattern Matrix for leadership Scale for teachers group

Table 6.21 Five Leadership Roles from parents’ views

Table 6.22 Five Leadership Roles from teachers’ views

Table 6.23 Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of school values (parents respondents)

Table 6.24 Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of educational experience (parents respondents)

Table 6.25 Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of school atmosphere (parents respondents)

Table 6.26 Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of health and wellbeing (parents respondents)

Table 6.27 Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of interactive quality (parents respondents)

Table 6.28 Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of teachers (parents respondents)

Table 6.29 Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of school values (teachers respondents)
Table 6.30 Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of school atmosphere (teachers respondents) ........................................................................................................................................177

Table 6.31 Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of health and wellbeing (teachers respondents) ........................................................................................................................................179

Table 6.32 Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of teachers (teachers respondents) ........................................................................................................................................180

Table 6.33 Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of teaching and learning facilities (teachers respondents) ........................................................................................................................................182
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1 Numbers of preschools in Malaysia from 2006 to 2008 ........................................... 3
Figure 1.2 Numbers of preschool classes in Malaysia from 2006 to 2008 ................................. 4
Figure 1.3 Number of student enrolments in Malaysian preschools from 2006 to 2008 .......... 5
Figure 3.1 Conceptual framework on the roles of educational leadership towards providing service quality in education ........................................................................................................ 40
Figure 3.2 CLASS broad domains with eleven dimensions .......................................................... 40
Figure 5.1 View of preschool located at the single-storey terrace house (unit house) ........... 112
Figure 5.2 View of preschool located on the ground floor of low-cost apartment .................. 113
Figure 5.3 View of a preschool surrounded by fences for safety ............................................ 114
Figure 5.4 View of preschool class that is cheerful ................................................................. 115
Figure 5.5 View of preschool classroom with unsuitable facilities ......................................... 119
Figure 5.6 View of preschool with insufficient playing facilities ............................................. 120
Figure 6.1 Scree Plot of the Service Quality Scale for parents group .................................. 134
Figure 6.2 Scree Plot of the Service Quality Scale for teachers group .................................. 134
Figure 6.3 Scree Plot of the Leadership Scale for parents group ............................................. 141
Figure 6.4 Scree Plot of the Leadership Scale for teachers group ............................................. 142
Figure 6.5 The model of relationships between service quality (dependent variables) and leadership roles in preschool education (independent variables) from parents’ perspectives 161
Figure 6.6 The model of relationships between service quality (dependent variables) and leadership roles in preschool education (independent variables) from teachers’ perspectives 162
Figure 7.1 Factors contributing to quality in Malaysian public preschools ............................... 185
Figure 7.2 The influences of preschool leaders’ roles on service quality in preschool education ......................................................................................................................... 198
The purpose of this thesis is to examine the factors contributing to service quality in Malaysian public preschool education. Due to the facts that private preschools are more preferred compared to public preschools, the issue of service quality had been brought up. The exploratory study identified the factors of quality through interviews with parents, teachers and agencies providing public preschool education. Guided by quality elements in Early Childhood Education Rating Scale Revised or ECERS-R (Harms et al. 1998), an instrument was developed to get a general picture of teachers’ and parents’ views. This thesis also aimed to identify the links between service quality and leadership in preschool education. An instrument on leadership particularly based on Sergiovanni (1984) ‘Forces of Leadership’ was utilized in the study. This thesis employed concurrent multi-method designs that combine both qualitative and quantitative methods by utilizing semi structured interview and self-administered questionnaires.

Content analysis was utilized to analyze the interviews containing findings on service quality factors. While in quantitative study, factor analyses were conducted to identify factors contributing to quality and important leadership roles in preschool education. The links between service quality and leadership roles were addressed using multiple regression analysis.

Based on results using both qualitative and quantitative methods, seven factors of quality in Malaysian public preschools were identified: school values, school atmosphere, health and wellbeing, teachers, facilities, interactions; and educational experiences. The elements that were significant with Malaysian context in providing preschool service quality were the emphasis on
Islamic education, the encouragement of integration among multi-ethnics and the emphasis on English language for non-native speakers.

The roles of leaders had positive relationship with the provision of preschool service quality. This study addressed the roles of leaders that were essential to be applied in improving quality. Planning the school operation was the most important role of preschool leaders in providing service quality. It happened to be so as the other roles: managing teaching and learning process; and cultivating culture were included together in ‘planning’. Furthermore the possession of leadership quality such as skills and knowledge in leading also played significant roles in service quality.

Keywords: Malaysian preschool education, service quality, leadership, perceptions
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Preschool institutions in Malaysia began in the 1950s (Hussin, 1996). The style of education at that time was mostly influenced by British education since Malaysia had been a British colony until 1957. The preschool education system during that time was exclusive and barely affordable for most people. The development of preschool institutions between 1950 and 1960 was mostly organized by Christian missionaries, individuals and the private sectors. However, most of the students enrolled were only from high income families because the fees charged were too expensive for most people. Thus only a few children received the opportunity to attend preschools. Children living in suburban areas and villages therefore never had the opportunity to learn.

With low income families aware of the importance of preschool education, the Asia Foundation contributed finances to the Malaysian Workers Association to introduce a preschool project, similar to the Headstart scheme that operated in the United States of America in 1969. This first project began in Kampung Muniandy, Kampung Manggis and Kampung Sentosa in Selangor, a state of Malaysia. The purpose of this project aimed at children from Malay, Chinese and Indian background who came from poor families. This project began based on the results of studies in the US showing that children who attended the Headstart project achieved more and were personally better behaved in the long term compared to those who did not attend.

The initiative had been taken by Department of Community Development in 1969 (at that time part of the Ministry of Agriculture) to provide preschool programs in rural and suburban areas in
Malaysia. The establishment of *Tabika KEMAS* (*KEMAS* preschool) was done to give educational and social opportunities to children from low income families. The preschool program also introduced them to a more stimulating environment of learning not available at home. Up to now, *KEMAS* provided the highest number of preschools in Malaysia.

There were also other government agencies and official bodies that established their own preschools such as FELDA (Federal Land Development Authority) in the 1970s, the Community Relationship Council (currently known as National Unity Department or *PERPADUAN*) in 1976 and RISDA (Rubber Industry Smallholders' Development Authority) in 1980. Many such organizations from the private sector and non-government organizations (NGOs) introduced their own preschool education schemes. One such organization is major private preschools in Malaysia operates under the auspices of the Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia or *ABIM* (local acronym). This organization is a non-government one and non-partisan, its mission being to produce good Muslims who are knowledgeable and will contribute their expertise to society. There are also private preschools developed from other religious systems, i.e. Christian, Hindu and Buddhist, political parties (*Parti SeIslam Malaysia, Malaysian Chinese Association*), corporate associations (*TELEKOM, PETRONAS, and TNB*), and volunteer associations and individuals.

The Education Act 1996 made a very significant impact on preschool education in Malaysia when it was included in the National Education System. The number of preschool education centers in Malaysia increased every year. The increase in the number of preschools was augmented by the development of ‘Annex’ preschools in 1992, which was organized in primary schools to deliver education facilities to poor children in urban and rural areas. The starting
number of the preschools was 1131 and by 2008, more than 5000 preschools were organized by the Ministry of Education.

According to ‘Population Distribution and Basic Demographic Characteristics 2010’ provided by Department of Statistics Malaysia, the total population is 28.3 million of which 91.8 per cent are Malaysian citizens and 8.2 per cent are non-citizens. Malaysian citizens consist of the ethnic groups Malays (67.4%), Chinese (24.6%), Indians (7.3%) and others (0.7%). In Malaysia, Islam is the most widely professed religion with the proportion of 61.3 per cent. As a multi-racial nation, other religions embraced are Buddhism (19.8%), Christianity (9.2%) and Hinduism (6.3%). Given the percentages of ethnic and religious backgrounds, most of the public preschools are attended by the highest proportion of ethnic and religion. This also influences the demographic data in the study as can be found in Chapter 6.

1.2 The Growth of Preschool Education in Malaysia

In 2008, there were 20, 584 preschools in Malaysia (MOE, 2009). Preschools in the public sector are run by several ministries and departments: (1) Ministry of Education (MOE), (2) Community Development Department (KEMAS) as part of the Ministry of Rural and Regional Development, (3) National Unity Department (PERPADUAN) under the Ministry of National Unity and Social Integration and (4) State Islamic Religion Department (SIRD) which operates in each Malaysian state.
Figure 1.1 compares the number of preschools in Malaysia based on different types of governmental agencies and private organizations from 2006 to 2008. Overall, the number of preschools in each year increased except for the KEMAS preschools. However, KEMAS preschools are still provided the highest number of preschools in each year. In 2006, 2007 and 2008, KEMAS had 7478, 7353 and 6994 preschools, respectively. The second highest preschool educational service providers were private sector ones with 4377, 5096 and 5705 preschools from 2006 to 2008. These were followed by preschools organized by the Ministry of Education, PERPADUAN preschools (National Unity Department, Ministry of National Unity and Social Integration), SIRD (KAFA is local acronym) preschools (organized by the State Islamic Religion Department) and ABIM (Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia).
Figure 1.2 shows the number of preschool classes in Malaysia based on the various government agencies and private organizations. Most preschool classes were private sector concerns; 18,903 classes in 2006, 21,586 classes in 2007 and 31,823 classes in 2008. The second largest number was KEMAS preschools with 8,234, 8,411 and 8,364 for the three years, respectively. From this chart, it is evident that there is a large difference between private preschools and government preschools. The ratio of private preschools increased every year. In 2006 and 2007, the average number of classes offered for one preschool was about 4 classes. While in 2008, the average number of classes increased to 5.5 classes. Compared to government preschools (MOE, KEMAS, PERPADUAN and SIRD), the average number of classes per one preschool was 1.2 for each year.
Figure 1.3 compares the numbers of student enrolment in Malaysian preschools from 2006 to 2008. This graph shows the preferences of parents to enroll their children in private preschools and the number of enrolments in private preschools increased from year to year. In 2006, the number was 306,731 and this increased to 339,536 and 339,542 in the following years. The enrolment in MOE preschools also rose over the years, from 106,290, 132,209 and then to 149,178, respectively.

Referring to the statistical data above, it can be seen here that there is an imbalance in the classes compared to the number of preschools provided by each sector. Comparing Figures 1.1 and 1.2, the number of public preschools is higher than that of private preschools. However, the number of classes offered for each public preschool is very small. In public preschools, there are only one or two classes in one preschool. In contrast to private preschools, the number of classes might be up to six. One issue that can be raised here is why there is a limitation of number of classes in public preschools, while the private preschools have as many classes as they do, which is done in order to make more profits. It can be argued that: (1) there is the matter of the quality of public preschools, which forces the government to offer only a small number of classes, and
better promotion prospects and benefits offered by the private preschools. Perceptions of quality influence parents’ preferences. This will influence the number of classes that can be offered because it is based on customer demand. As a result, the number of child enrolments in private preschools is far higher compared to public preschools (refer to Figure 1.3).

Aligned with the Ninth Malaysian Planning (2006-2010), the government has emphasized improving the quality of public schools. This theme is closely linked to the above matter of increasing the number of preschool classes because better quality, level of competence and effectiveness of education management can be achieved. (Marzuki et al., 2008).

1.3 Issues to be analyzed in this study

The growth of the preschool education industry is a positive development in Malaysia because it indicates the importance of early childhood education. As mentioned by Hashim and Lah (2007), people in Malaysia are now aware that preschool education is the most important level of education to develop the emotions, physical, social and mental development of children before they enter the formal education in primary school.

There are, however, important issues or consequences emerging in various agencies when they provide preschool education. Since each of the agencies have their own mission, expectations, orientation, priorities and abilities, the situation evokes imbalance and unstandardized management and administration of preschool education (Hussin, 1996). The delivery of services differs markedly. As a service industry, the topic of quality cannot be denied and always being a benchmark for many people when it comes to evaluation. According to Hasan and Kerr (2003),
the management gives significant impacts on service quality of one organization. This is a vital topic that must be discussed since service quality is a very important aspect in assessing the advantages and disadvantages of one preschool.

The number of enrolments in private preschools is higher than public preschools even though the number of public preschools is greater (MOE, 2009). This situation raises issues about the preferences of parents as customers in choosing the best preschool education for their children. According to Yahaya and Ramli (2003), parents prefer to choose private preschools rather than public ones because private preschools have a better reputation. By advertising their extra advantages parents much prefer to enroll their children in these types of preschools.

According to Hewitt and Maloney (2000), Malaysian parents prefer mastering the basic academic skills and other advanced knowledge rather than playing and socializing. In contrast, the public preschools such as KEMAS and PERPADUAN’s favors educating children to be confident in socialization, to improve the standard of life and deliver beneficial knowledge and skills. The private preschools, however, focus more on academic skills such as reading, writing and numerical mastering rather than social aspects.

Based on these sorts of issues, the researcher feels that a study of public preschools should be done in order to investigate the preschool leadership and management; and their relationship to service quality. Intense competition with private preschools has made the public preschools unpopular and it is assumed that they provide less quality education.

This study looks at the issue of service quality in preschool education from the various perspectives of stakeholders to uncover the most important and preferred aspects of service
quality in preschool education. This study will also investigate the relationship between the leadership of preschool education and service quality being provided. The two major research questions are:

1. What are the factors affecting the service quality in preschool education in Malaysia?
2. What is the relationship between service quality and leadership in preschool education?

1.4 The background of the study

In measuring the quality of preschools, it is difficult to use only one indicator or even multiple quantitative indices (Rao et al., 2003). Preschool education consists of many elements, and each has its own weighting of quality level. Furthermore, the quality dimensions of preschool are viewed differently by a range of stakeholders. In many studies, quality of preschools is assessed according to what is known as structural and process quality (Cryer et al., 1999; Howes, 1997; Rao et al., 2003; Scarr et al., 1994; Torquati et al., 2007; Phillips et al., 2000; LoCasale-Crouch et al., 2007; Ghazvini and Mullis, 2002).

Structural quality is measured through the indirect ways it contributes to preschool such as teacher-child ratios, class size, qualifications and salaries to teachers and staff; and width of school buildings and areas. The structural features are also built from the aspects of the child care environment that are affected by a variety of influences, such as government regulations, school policies and economic environment. According to these researchers, state regulations have mandated child-adult ratio, group sizes and education and training for teachers. Center
policies determine the features such as presence/absence of school-age programs, teachers’ salaries and school fees. Economic or environment climate is not affected by either state regulations or center policies but it does influence teacher turnover, enrolment and school profits. All these three structural features influence to a great extent the process quality of preschool education.

Process quality contributes more directly to children and preschools in general, in that it is measured by observing the center and classrooms, teacher-child interactions, type of instruction, room environment, activities and materials, relationships with parents; and health and safety routines (Espinosa, 2002; Cryer et al., 1999; Rao et al., 2003; Phillipsen et al., 1997).

There are local studies that discussed on the quality and curriculum involved in early childhood education. Nor (2006) looks the quality of teachers, curriculum and classroom environment do have a high impact on the provision of the maximum benefits to preschool children. Majzub (2003) discusses the challenges in Malaysian preschool education to provide quality education and proposed a number of reasons for this problem. The complexity of management of preschool education in Malaysia is a major influencing factor. Without comparing between the public and private preschools, the former are already varying their provision of quality and high standards. Quality issues such as the qualifications of teachers, types of teachers’ training, teaching and learning processes and provision of facilities has led to a focus on the management and leadership aspects of the organization providing preschool education.

Linked to the concern for the importance of leadership in early childhood education, sound management practices significantly influence the quality of service delivery (Hayden, 1997). As
mentioned by Siraj-Blatchford and Manni (2006), teachers who manage to create warm interactive relationships, understand the pedagogical contents and display leadership qualities can significantly improve the quality of preschool education.

1.5 The need for this study

As a developing country that is looking forward to achieve the government aspiration in Vision 2020, education is part of the strategy. When preschool education was first established, people appreciated the government for making them aware of the importance of education. This positive development caused many individuals or private organizations to grab the opportunity to offer preschool education. In a competitive environment parents have become more selective in choosing the best preschool for their children. This study identifies the quality elements that are perceived as important by parents and other stakeholders. From here, the management of public preschools will understand better the needs of these stakeholders and will play a part in improving quality.

In Malaysia, discussions on the leadership and management of preschool education are limited. The specific focus on the impacts of leadership in public preschools is rarely discussed. Furthermore, the structures of leadership in managing preschools are different among MOE, KEMAS, PERPADUAN and SIRD. Due to this deficiency, this research on service quality of preschool education is vital. From the perceptions of various stakeholders, the researcher identifies strong indicators which contribute to service quality in preschool education. The relationship between factors of service quality and the leadership aspects of public preschools in
Malaysia is investigated in order to evaluate the importance of leadership in preschool so that the quality they provide improves.

This study is also important because preschool education is a growing service industry and has not received much attention from management and marketing researchers. Preschool education needs a high-involvement relationship between service deliverers and the recipients of the service. This type of service that claim high credential qualities makes customers’ evaluation a complex (Kim and Smith, 2007).

1.6 The structure of the study

Interviews are conducted at the beginning stage of this study in order to document and explain the perceptions of service quality according to various stakeholders in preschool education in Malaysia. The researcher conducts interviews by using the phenomenographic approach with a number of key informants. The phenomenographic approach is a study of human understanding of specific phenomena (Marton, 1992). The term “phenomenography” was developed by Ference Marton in 1981 from work that originated in the 1970s at Gothenburg, Sweden with the aim of describing differences in conceptions of learning situations (Osteraker, 2002).

The objective of the phenomenographic approach is to explore the second order perspective which is the subjective reality about how somebody experiences something (Osteraker, 2002). Hence, by interviewing, the researcher will receive a variety of responses from participants who conceptualize the phenomenon and have certain perceptions about the quality of preschool education in Malaysia.
In this study, the researcher adopts a mixed methodology to investigate the relationships among various quality elements in preschool education and leadership. Mixed methods research is formally defined as the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

For this research, the researcher attempts to identify factors constituting service quality in preschool education in Malaysia. Here, the researcher implements a ‘thick description’ strategy to obtain a complete understanding of the factors contributing to service quality. Hence a qualitative study is needed. Furthermore, the relationships between service quality and leadership aspects of preschool are best identified using quantitative method.

By applying both qualitative and quantitative methods, the researcher obtains rich information on stakeholders’ perceptions of service quality in preschool education. There are two phases in the data collection process. The first phase consists of interviewing the stakeholders of the public preschool educational service. The second phase involves conducting questionnaires surveys.

This study focuses on three groups of stakeholders in preschool education and these are government officers, teachers and parents. Both avenues mean that both parties have interests that are recognized and that they have strong links to each other.

Interestingly, the government’s roles are very significant because the preschools are conditioned by policies and regulations: licensing, curriculum applied, staff selection, fees and basic facilities of the premise (Rahman et al., 2008). According to Bennet (2004), the regulations and policy being enforced are influenced by location and physical conditions, training and work conditions,
student-staff ratios and curriculum content. This is supported by Baytekin (2009) who stated that the school management varies based on the existing philosophy of education and national policy. Thus, the government plays a major role as the provider of preschool education.

The other important stakeholder in preschool educational service is the teacher. Teachers are important in preschool education because of their direct interactions with students (Pianta et al., 2005; Cryer et al., 1999; Rao et al., 2003; Torquati et al., 2007; Lara-Cinisomo et al., 2009; Scarr et al., 1994; Ghazvini and Mullis, 2002). They are also important in managing the classrooms (Brophy, 1988; KaylkçI, 2009). Teachers play very important roles in implementing the quality aspects of a school and being part of the overall management of the preschool.

Parents are also among the most important key stakeholders of preschool education. In preschool education sector, parents are considered to be customers because they make decisions in selecting preschools since their children are too young to make decisions themselves (Kim and Smith, 2007). Parents’ participation is also significant because it is associated with positive academic performance and social competence (Kohl et al., 2000).

1.6.1 Qualitative Method

On this theme, the researcher applies semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interview applies flexible ways of asking questions in that it allows new questions to be devised or expanded on during the interview phase. According to Grindsted (2005), semi-structured interviews can create new insights into how people attribute meaning to their world when they are socially interacting.
The interviews with government key informants involved: (1) Preschool Education Unit in School Division, Ministry of Education, (2) Department of Community Development, Ministry of Rural and Regional Development, (3) National Unity Department, Ministry of National Unity and Social Integration and (4) State Islamic Religion Department. Eight public preschool teachers and twelve parents were selected randomly from the four types of preschools in the study.

1.6.2 Quantitative Method

For the quantitative part of this study, questionnaires surveys are applied. The questionnaires are distributed to a large number of teachers and parents. The use of questionnaires is essential to understand the important factors of preschool service quality and the impacts of leadership towards achieving it. Ninety-eight public preschools consist of MOE preschools, KEMAS preschools, PERPADUAN preschool and SIRD preschools) are selected using convenience sampling from the Klang Valley. Parts of Klang Valley are developed areas and located near Kuala Lumpur which offers many job opportunities to the people living there. Klang Valley comprises Kuala Lumpur and its suburbs, the Federal Territory of Putrajaya and adjoining districts in the state of Selangor: Petaling, Klang, Gombak, Hulu Langat and Sepang. In these developed areas, there are variety ranges of students’ family household income. Thus, with different household income and academic levels, the similarities and differences on service quality perceptions can be identified. The teachers were met directly by the researcher who invited them to participate in the study. The researcher also requested the teachers to distribute
the questionnaires to the parents. The completed instruments are collected a week after the meetings with the teachers.

1.7 Data analysis

In the data analysis process, two types of statistics are obtained; descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics are statistics that describe the phenomena of interest such as maximum, minimum, means, standard deviations and variance. Inferential statistics are statistical results that let us draw inferences from a sample to the population such as multiple regression, factor analysis and correlations (Sekaran, 2003).

In analyzing data from the questionnaires, multiple regression analysis is performed to test the relationship among the stated factors. Regression analysis is used to identify the patterns of relationship between service quality and leadership in preschool education. Factor analysis also is appropriate in that it allows us to identify factors affecting stakeholders’ perceptions of service quality in the preschools.

1.8 The structure of the thesis

Chapter One provides a brief introduction to the research questions and research background. Chapter Two discusses the background of preschool education in Malaysia. Chapter Three discusses the literature on service quality and leadership in education. It explains the factors of service quality in preschool education and various roles of leadership in preschool education in
the context of quality service. Chapter Four discusses the research methodology. Chapters Five and Six analyze the qualitative and quantitative research data, respectively. Finally, Chapter Seven concludes the thesis and reflects on the significant contribution of this study to the topic, and offers avenues for further research.

1.9 The contributions of the study

Due to the development of public preschool education in the country, the researcher believes a detail research on service quality is important to be conducted. This study looked at all four types of public preschools and addressed the quality factors that were important in Malaysian context. The conceptual framework on quality factors revealed mostly the Western viewpoints on preschool services. This study contributed to the existing theory with the additional of cultural and religious aspects that were very strong in Malaysia.

The study on relationships between the provision of preschool service quality and elements of leadership enriches the germination of theory on leadership in preschool education. The uniqueness of public preschools in Malaysia (as they are provided by four different government agencies) extends the theory of preschool leadership that is only browse by Western scholars.
1.10 Summary

This chapter discusses the flow of the thesis starting from identifying the focus and objectives of the research, the methods applied and the analysis implemented in order to achieve the findings that would be the answers for the research questions in this thesis.
CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA

“Education in Malaysia is an on-going effort towards further developing the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner, so as to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonic, based on a firm belief in and devotion to God. Such an effort is designed to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards and who are responsible and capable of achieving high level of personal well-being as well as being able to contribute to the harmony and betterment of the family, the society and the nation at large” (Malaysian National Education Philosophy)

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the background of preschool education development in Malaysia. One of the most important scenarios in Malaysian National Education Development is the preschool education. Preschool education in Malaysia developed since 1950s and was institutionalized into national education through Educational Act 1996. The increase number of preschools in Malaysia since 1970s until now is the sign of awareness of various stakeholders on the importance of early childhood education. The aspiration from the Malaysian National Education Philosophy indicates all levels of education in the country are essential and meaningful to develop individuals with certain quality. With their own objectives and agenda, a number of government agencies offer the preschool education.

In Preliminary Report Malaysia Education Blueprint (MEB) 2013-2025, there are five outcomes that inspire Malaysian education system as a whole: access, quality, equity, unity and efficiency. Improving access to education, raising standards (quality), closing achievement gaps (equity), promoting unity amongst students, and maximizing system efficiency were the essential focuses of the government to establish comprehensive
transformation programme in Malaysian education system. The five system aspirations lead to eleven shifts of transformations which are to:

1. Provide equal access to quality education of an international standard
2. Ensure every child is proficient in Bahasa Malaysia and English language
3. Develop values-driven Malaysians
4. Transform teaching into the profession of choice
5. Ensure high-performing school leaders
6. Empower JPN (State Education Department), PPD (District Education Office) and schools to customize solutions based on need
7. Leverage ICT to scale up quality learning across Malaysia
8. Transform Ministry (of Education) delivery capabilities and capacity
9. Partner with parents, community, and private sector at scale
10. Maximize student outcomes for every ringgit
11. Increase transparency for direct public accountability

The transformations are aimed to impact the stakeholders in Malaysian education quality as a whole, particularly to the students, teachers, school leaders, ministry officials and parents. They aim students to experience their learning journey in conducive environment, teachers to develop the world-class capabilities, school leaders to become excellent instructional leaders, ministry official to develop skills and attributes to support schools; and parents to see tangible and sustained improvements in the educational experiences of their children.

The Preliminary Report Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 outlines the sequence of education transformation plan which will take over thirteen years. The sequences are due to the need to build the educational system’s capacity and capability successively. The three waves are as follows (adapted from MEB 2013-2025 p. E-26):
• **Wave 1 (2013-2015):** Turn around system by supporting teachers and focusing on core skills. The Ministry’s focus during this phase will be on delivering a rapid turnaround programme. During this period, the focus will be on raising teaching quality by upskilling the existing pool of teachers, raising school leadership quality by improving student literacy (in both *Bahasa Malaysia* and English language) and numeracy through intensive remedial programmes. The Ministry will also strengthen and empower state and district offices to improve the quality of frontline support provided to all schools. By the end of Wave 1, the Ministry will ensure that all teachers, principals, and school have achieved a minimum quality standard.

• **Wave 2 (2016-2020):** Accelerate system improvement. During the second wave, the Ministry will roll out structural changes aimed at accelerating the pace of change. These include moving all 410,000 teachers and 10,000 principals onto a new career package, restructuring the federal, state, and district offices to align with the revised roles laid out in Wave 1, and introducing a new secondary and revised primary curriculum that addresses concerns regarding the knowledge, skills, and values needed to thrive in today’s global economy.

• **Wave 3 (2021-2025):** Move towards excellence with increased operational flexibility: By the start of the third wave, all schools, teachers, and principals should be performing well above the minimum standard. As such, the Ministry will focus on increasing operational flexibility to cultivate a peer-led culture of professional excellence. The Ministry will also move most, if not all school, onto a school-based management model, and scale up successful models of instructional innovation. The goal is to create a self-sustaining system that is capable of innovating and taking achievements to greater heights.
Aligned with educational system aspired in the blueprint, the students’ outcomes are also emphasized. Students are aimed to be enriched with (1) knowledge (fully literate and numerate), (2) thinking skills (being creative and innovative in thinking, problem-solving and learning), (3) leadership skills (comprises of entrepreneurship skills, resilience, emotional intelligence and strong communication skills), (4) bilingual proficiency (proficient in Bahasa Malaysia as the national language and in English as a second language), (5) ethics and spiritually (strong shared values in spirituality, integrity and civic responsibility) and (6) national identity (identify themselves proudly as Malaysians, irrespective of ethnicity, beliefs, socio-economic status or geographical location).

In Tenth Malaysia Plan 2011-2015, the government plans to adopt an integrated human capital and talent development work to nurture and develop Malaysians across their entire life-cycle, from early childhood education, basic education, tertiary education and all the way to their adult working lives. It is stated that poor quality performance in education brings negative consequences for the country’s future as the education levels are consistently correlated with the economic growth. This government plan focuses specifically in revamping the education system to significantly raise student outcomes.

The public preschool education in Malaysia is a unique industry of education as there are four different government agencies with their own objectives providing the education:

1. Jabatan Kemajuan Masyarakat or Community Development Department (local acronym is KEMAS) under Ministry of Rural and Regional Development,
2. Jabatan Perpaduan Negara or National Unity Department (local acronym is PERPADUAN) under Ministry of National Unity and Social Integration,
3. Ministry of Education (MOE); and
4. State Islamic Religion Department that is located at every state in Malaysia.
2.2 Agencies providing public preschool education

2.2.1 Jabatan Kemajuan Masyarakat (KEMAS) or Community Development Department

*Jabatan Kemajuan Masyarakat (KEMAS)* or Community Development Department was established as an initiative after the development of Adult Lesson Division in 1961 which focused on illiterate eradication program. The division was renamed to *Jabatan Kemajuan Masyarakat* or *(KEMAS)* after the launch of Malaysian New Economic Policy *(NEP)* in 1970.

The facts obtained from *KEMAS* (2012) revealed, the census that was conducted after the Malaysian independence in 1957 showed 1,868,948 adults and 2,379,213 aged ten to fourteen years old were illiterate. This was found as the main hurdles to the government to achieve the agenda of national development. NEP was developed to change the attitude and understanding of community in rural areas on the importance of education and economic development to increase their level of economics and life. Due to that agenda, *KEMAS* initiated to offer programs such as household economics classes, job trainings, religious classes and preschool education.

Among the public preschools in Malaysia, *KEMAS* preschools were the first preschools provided by the government. It was initiated by *Jabatan Kemajuan Masyarakat* or Department of Community Development in 1969, (at that time was under Ministry of Agriculture), which focused on preschool program in rural and suburban areas over the country. The initiative was taken to give the educational and social opportunities to children from low income families.
The trial project was conducted in 1970 which developed ten KEMAS preschools in Malaysia. From time to time the development was widened to all over the country including rural areas in states at west Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak. The table below shows the increasing number of KEMAS preschool classes in Malaysia:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>KEMAS preschool classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>1534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>5450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>6846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>8816</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1: Number of KEMAS preschool classes in year 1970-2011 (Source: Department of Community Development, 2011)

The development of KEMAS preschools is based on 3Ks- kehendak (demands), keperluan (needs) and keupayaan (ability) of community. Generally, the local community applied for the school via the neighbourhood association. Once KEMAS received the application, they investigated the area to ensure it fulfils certain criteria: the suitability of the location, the safety of the premises, the convenient use of water and electric utilities; and census on number of children aged four to six.

There were certain cases that KEMAS had to start the initiative to open preschool classes. The cases regularly occurred at remote areas in which the community were not aware on the importance of education. The objectives of KEMAS preschools are:

1. to encourage social, emotional, spiritual, physical and intellectual development of children through exposures and interactions
2. to prepare and sharpen basic skills in 4Rs (Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and Reasoning) before entering formal education in primary school
3. to widen the experience and learning opportunities for all students of different backgrounds
4. to develop children’s potentials through planned teaching and learning activities that are suitable with their levels of ages, abilities and interests
5. to encourage children implementing moral values in everyday life; and being creative and curious
6. to educate children on the importance of health and safety practices through balanced diet and nutritious meals; and physical activities.

The management of KEMAS preschools involves the cooperation of many stakeholders. The preschool teachers or known as Community Developers are responsible in teaching and learning programs, co-curriculum management and maintenance of relationships with parents. The assistant teachers are obliged to prepare the meals, maintain the cleanliness and assist the teachers. The preschool committees (Jawatankuasa Tabika) of KEMAS preschools which consist of parents, teachers and community leaders play important roles in (1) students intake, (2) preschool preparation and safety, (3) planning and programs implementation, (4) management and administration and (5) encouraging parents and community to involve in the school committee (KEMAS, 2007). As KEMAS preschool is usually a small preschool with one or two classrooms, it does not have specific school leader or head master. Preschools that are located in one parliament area of a district are supervised by a Preschool Supervisor. The Preschool Supervisors have to ensure the preschools are running smoothly and they are responsible to be the middlemen between the teachers and organization of KEMAS. They are obliged to supervise and observe teaching and learning process in KEMAS preschools and are usually are conducted on the first and final weeks of learning terms.
2.2.2 Jabatan Perpaduan Negara (PERPADUAN) or Department of National Unity

After the racial riots that led to a declaration of a state of ‘national emergency’ in 13 May 1969, the government emphasized on certain policy in socio-economic fields towards the integrations and wellbeing of multi-cultural community in Malaysia. The main purpose of the department is to strengthen and foster the spirit of integration among Malaysians that aligned with government policy in Federal Constitution and National Principles. The Department of National Unity which is placed under Prime Minister Department consists of five divisions namely (1) Division of Management, (2) Division of Corporate Affairs, (3) Division of Planning and Development, (4) Division of Research and Impacts and (5) Division of Community Development (PERPADUAN, 2012).

As stated in Preliminary Report Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025, with the shared space for all Malaysians, schools have a unique potential to be a place to foster unity. In line with this, the Preschool Unit which is under the Division of Community Development holds roles to (1) plan, manage preschool programs as well as open new classes (2) oversee and supervise the preschools including the premises and facilities, (3) manage and coordinate teaching and learning resources and facilities; and (4) supervise and observe reports and data related to PERPADUAN preschools. The preschools were first established in 1976 and were widely accepted by parents and community.

PERPADUAN preschools are opened in housing areas, low-cost apartments, villages and suburban areas based on the demands of the community. PERPADUAN supports the development of its preschools with the provision of Ringgit Malaysia (RM) 12,000 to each class for the purpose of enhancing the facilities. The preschools use curriculum guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education by inserting the elements of integration which is hoped may cultivate good values and unity through multicultural backgrounds of children.
and parents. *PERPADUAN* preschools prioritize children with parents’ monthly income less than *Ringgit Malaysia (RM)* 1500 and from multicultural backgrounds.  

*Jawatankuasa Penyelaras Tabika PERPADUAN (JPTP)* or *PERPADUAN* Preschools Coordinator Committee is developed in preschools that have two or more classes. This committee which consists of parents, teachers and community leaders hold important roles in *PERPADUAN* preschools. The roles of the committee include planning the preschool activities in order to ensure the welfare, safety and health of the students; assisting the teachers with teaching and learning facilities; and bounding the networking between public preschools and local community.

### 2.2.3 Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education implemented annex preschool education programs that involved 1131 classes as a pilot project in 1992 (MOE, 2012). Based on Cabinet of Ministers Meeting in June 2001, it was decided to enlarge the number of preschools starting year 2002. The Education Act 1996 allocates important aspects of preschool education such as the preschool establishment, the authority of minister to establish the preschools, preschool curriculum, medium language and religious teaching.

The Ministry of Education provided National Preschool Standard Curriculum (NPSC) in 2010 which is applied by public preschools including *KEMAS* and *PERPADUAN*. In NPSC, there are six components emphasized in preschool education:

1. Communication. The integration of linguistic skills verbally and non-verbally in four common languages in Malaysia: Malay, English, Chinese and Tamil.
2. Spiritual, behaviour and value. The appreciation of religious practices, beliefs, behaviour and values.

3. Humanity. The exposure to knowledge and practices of society and environment; and appreciation of patriotism and spirit of integration.

4. Personal skills. The encouragement of leadership personal quality through curriculum and co-curriculum.

5. Physical and aesthetics. The development of physical and health; and the encouragement of imagination, creativity and skills.

6. Science and technology literacy. The encouragement on the science, mathematics skills and technology-based skills.

2.2.4 Selangor State Islamic Religion Department

The establishment of Selangor State Islamic Religion Department (JAIS) began from the concern of late Sultan of Selangor. On 1 October 1945 Islamic Affairs Department was established and it played roles with regard the Islamic matters among Muslims in Selangor such as jurisprudence and education.

The objectives of SIRD are to:

- Prepare efficient and the best infrastructures and service system
- Provide strong Islamic education to all levels of community in Selangor state
- Plan, implement and observe da’wah programs in community
- Plan, implement and observe Islamic family development programs
- Implement current Islamic laws
- Strengthen the faith of community through research, observation and enforcement
SIRD plays roles in assuring Muslims’ life such as marriage, education and communication are accordance with Islamic teaching. The ‘5Es Formula’ is referred in this organization as to ensure its service performance. The first E is ‘educated’ that encourages community to update their knowledge and information. The second E is ‘efficient’. Being efficient is SIRD’s aim to satisfy the customers. The third E is ‘effective’. The programs generated by this organization are aimed to be effective and achieve their objectives. Next, the fourth E is ‘e-government’. It is a paradigm shift for public service for the purpose of fastening and easing the community’s matters. Finally, the last E is ‘environment’. The environmental matter is the priority for this organization when having activities to ensure the environmental natures are preserved.

SIRD operates in eight main divisions: (1) Division of Management Services, (2) Division of Family Laws, (3) Division of Islamic Education, (4) Division of Enforcement, (5) Division of Research and Development, (6) Division of Impeachment, (7) Division of Mosque Management and (8) Division of Da’wah. The educational services including preschools, primary schools and secondary schools are provided by this department and managed under Division of Islamic Education. These three levels of education offer their own syllabus of education in which they highly focused on Islamic education. There are only twelve preschools offered by SIRD in nine districts of Selangor: Petaling, Hulu Langat, Klang, Gombak, Kuala Langat, Sepang, Kuala Selangor, Hulu Selangor and Sabak Bernam. Therefore, only one or two SIRD preschools are located in each district of Selangor. In one SIRD preschool, there are six to eight classes that cater education for children between four to six years old. There is one head master, teachers and assistant teachers working together in the school. The number of students could reach 150 depends on the number of classes offered.
Most of the SIRD teachers were *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia* (SPM) holders and had not received any training in early childhood education. The course is only conducted twice a year for the preschool teachers and organized by one of training centres in SIRD that is Islamic Education Management Training Centre. Besides, she mentioned that the modules should be standardized and reviewed by the experts in the early childhood education to ensure the inputs delivered were correct and accurate. Thus, one of the initiatives done by SRD was by dealing with the private colleges that offer early childhood education to get fees reduction to undergo six months certificate course.

### 2.3 Differences and similarities of the agencies

There are few similarities and differences of the government agencies that can be seen in providing preschool education in Malaysia. *KEMAS* is an agency that emphasizes the development of the rural community in terms socio-economic, physical, intellectual and spiritual. It is responsible for the implementation of early childhood education, literacy education and skills training in the community. It also enhances the socio-economic status villagers and is geared towards soft skills, spirituality, family and self excellence. As preschool education is only part of its services, *KEMAS* gets support from MOE in terms of training and curriculum.

While in *PERPADUAN*, it plays a very important role in meeting the challenges of globalization, which involves claims the right to freedom of expression, social justice and democratic space. *PERPADUAN* also has to deal with sensitive issues among races, religions or politics. Accordingly, the emphasis on social cohesion in the management of Malaysia's diverse ethnicity, religion and culture become a very important task for *PERPADUAN*. The establishment of *PERPADUAN* preschools is seen to have a significant impact to Malaysia
because the values of respecting and understanding among various races and religions are instilled since in early childhood education.

SIRD plays roles in Islamic religious affairs at the state level, including in the areas of education, mosque management and marriage. The education provided in preschools, primary schools and secondary schools are focusing more on Islamic education. Although SIRD has its own curriculum, the curriculum content from MOE is also included to ensure the comprehensiveness of contents in teaching and learning. The other difference that can be seen of SIRD preschools is its funder which is the state government while the other three are funded by federal government.

In the provision of preschool education, MOE is the main reference for other public agencies. By providing preschool curriculum, the contents in teaching and learning as well as the activities are similar. MOE also considered the elements of integration among multicultural and multi-religious students and Islamic education (which are emphasized by a PERPADUAN and SIRD) to be inserted into the curriculum. The differences and similarities of these government agencies become the advantages for public preschools in Malaysia as each of them may support and advise each other in delivering the best quality of education to the children.

2.4 Summary

*KEMAS, PERPADUAN, MOE and SIRD* have their own core services besides providing preschool education. They have their own management and leadership structures in managing preschool education. The differences in missions and objectives of the agencies are the factors the dissimilarity of quality services provided by these public agencies due to different resources, financial support and skills. Therefore this research is important to unpack the
perceptions of stakeholders regarding these public preschools to understand the needs in providing service quality and the roles of leadership.
CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review and analyse literature in the area of service quality in preschool education. This chapter also reviews the significance of leadership roles in educational institutions in reference to provision of service quality. The aims are to chart the body of knowledge and to show where the research problem fits into that body of knowledge. Accordingly, this chapter deals in sequence with three major themes. The first theme is the service quality in education; the second theme is the service quality in preschool education; while the third theme focuses on the links between service quality and leadership in education. Through thorough reviews of the literatures, the conceptual framework on factors of educational service quality and their relationship with roles in educational leadership are illustrated in Figure 3.1:

![Conceptual framework on the roles of educational leadership towards providing service quality in education](image)

Figure 3.1: Conceptual framework on the roles of educational leadership towards providing service quality in education
3.2 Service quality in education

Services may be defined as acts, performances and experiences- that are, the production and delivery of a service (Dagger & Lawley, 2003). Sallis (2002) claims the education industry as service industry because of its similarities with service characteristics. Scholars have defined general quality dimensions, particularly concerning services. The most popular set of dimensions has been introduced by Parasuraman, Zeithaml et al. (1985) and Zeithaml, Parasuraman et al. (1996). The development of service quality framework is later condensed from ten to five comprehensive dimensions (Berry & Parasuraman 1991). Gronroos (2000) proposes a compilation of seven service quality criteria as an alternative framework.

In twenty years back, some researchers have categorized service quality under two broad categories- technical and functional (Gronroos, 1984; Parasuraman et al., 1985; Parasuraman et al., 1988). In evaluating quality of service offered, the human interaction is essential to be considered (Bitner, 1990). Similarly to Cannon and Sheth (1994), a good relationship with various stakeholders is essential in maintaining a quality service. According to Herbig et al. (1994) reputation of an institution describes the service reliability and is comparable to zero defect philosophy.

Either in developed or developing countries, education is the most important element to be concerned (Heyneman, 2004). Attempting to the topic of service quality in education, many papers are found to discuss on higher education level (Angell et al., 2008; Athiyaman, 1997; Li and Kaye, 1999; Mai, 2005; Mostafa, 2007; Clemes et al., 2001; Yeo, 2008; Wright and O'Neill, 2002). Voss, Gruber & Szmigin (2007) aim to develop deeper understanding of teaching qualities that student’s desire. Mai (2005) makes comparison between UK and US students in terms of satisfaction, while Athiyaman (1997) makes comparison between
students’ pre-enrolment attitude and post enrolment attitude towards educational quality in higher education: teaching students well, availability of staff for student consultation, library services, computing facilities, recreational facilities, class sizes, level and difficulty of subject content and student workload.

Holford and Patkar (2003) define educational service quality as evaluated by students through their educational experience and identify five dimensions of service quality in pharmaceutical education: resources, interpersonal behaviour of faculty, faculty expertise, faculty communication and administration. In other study by Hill et al. (2003), the educational quality is found from quality of lecturer and the student support systems. According to Jusoh et al. (2004), tangibles, competence, attitude, content, delivery and reliability are important dimensions of service quality in higher education. Kwan and Ng (1999) have found course content, concern of students, facilities, assessment, medium of instruction, social activities and people as indicators of service quality in higher education in China and Hong Kong.

Sohail and Shaikh (2004) identify contact personnel, physical evidences, reputation, responsiveness, access to facilities and curriculum as the dimensions of service quality in higher education. On the other hand, university staff, recreational activities, facilities, campus environment, reputation, cost, family/friends and size/schedule are perceived as essential dimensions of service quality in higher education Joseph et al. (2005). Abdullah (2006) argues in his study that quality in higher education cannot only being evaluated through quality of academics. In higher education context, six dimensions: non-academic aspects, academic aspects, reputation, access, program issues and understanding are distinct and essential. From a study by Douglas et al. (2008), the determinants of service quality in higher education are identified in teaching, learning and assessment and ancillary services.
Jain et al. (2011) have classified service quality in higher education as consisting of two primary dimensions: program quality and quality of life. The sub-dimensions of program quality are curriculum, industry interaction, input quality and academic facilities; while quality of life includes non-academic processes, support facilities, campus and interaction quality.

According to Sahney et al. (2004), competence, attitude, content, delivery and reliability are the quality key requirements by students in an educational institute. In other study, by comparing service quality in higher education and services in general, the distinctive differences can be seen in seven dimensions: corporate collaboration, information and responsiveness, courses offered, internal evaluations, computer facilities, collaboration and comparisons, and library resources (Lagrosen et al., 2004).

### 3.3 Service quality in preschool education

Quality in preschool education is popularly discussed as it contributes to positive impacts to the children (Stipek and Ogana, 2000; Cassidy et al., 2005b). Cassidy et al. (2005b) find the quality of care and education for young children contribute to critical impact of children’s development. The children who attended higher quality early childhood centres show better academic outcomes, more positive student-teacher relationships, better behaviour and better social skills (Stipek and Ogana, 2000). The higher quality of child care is confirmed to have positive association with cognitive development for children (Burchinal et al., 2000; Clarke-Stewart et al., 2002; NICHD, 2003). NICHD (2002) reports on the importance of higher quality preschool education as a predictor of better pre-academic skills and language performance of children. Furthermore, according to Omar, Nazri et al. (2009), perceived
service quality is the most important determinant of parents’ satisfaction and this indicates either the preschool is preferred or not.

In measuring the quality of preschools, it is difficult to use only one indicator or even multiple quantitative indices (Rao et al., 2003). Preschool education comprises of many elements, thus each has its own weigh of quality level that should be accomplished. Besides, the quality dimensions of preschool are viewed differently from different stakeholders. Many researchers study the quality of preschools based on structural (Early et al., 2006; Phillipsen et al., 1997) and process quality (Cryer et al., 1999; Howes, 1997; Rao et al., 2003; Scarr et al., 1994; Torquati et al., 2007; Phillips et al., 2000; LoCasale-Crouch et al., 2007; Ghazvini and Mullis, 2002).

The quality of preschool education is broadly defined as broad range of characteristics of the preschool programs, including structural features that are instituted through policies and regulations, and process features that children experience directly (Vandell and Wolfe, 2002; Lamb and Ahnert, 2006). Policy makers, administrators, parents and teachers use term ‘preschool quality’ to describe a wide variety of characteristics of preschool programs that are believed to be beneficial to children who attend (Mashburn, 2008). Some researchers use term ‘global quality’ which is described as an overall view of child care programs including both structural and process-oriented factors (Cassidy et al., 2005a; Burchinal et al., 2000; Howes et al., 1992).

Structural features are those aspects of programs that have typically been targeted by regulation or financing and built from the aspects of the child care environment that are affected by a variety of influences, such as government regulations, centre policies and economic climate (Phillipsen et al., 1997). Structural quality is measured through the indirect
ways it contributes to preschool such as teacher-child ratios, class size, qualifications, experiences and compensation of teachers and staff (Early et al., 2006; Burchinal et al., 1996; Howes, 1997; Phillips et al., 2000). According to Phillipsen et al. (1997), state regulations mandate child-adult ratio, group sizes and education and training for teachers, centre policies determine features such as presence/absence of school-age programs, wages of teachers and fees; while economic or environment climate which is not affected by either state regulations or centre policies affects teacher turnover, enrolment, profits and surplus of the school.

Process quality refers to the features of preschool programs that children experience directly while they are enrolled in programs, such as the ways teachers implement activities and lessons, the nature and quality of interactions between adults and children and between children and their peers, the quality of space and furnishings, the type of instruction, the room environment, the abundance of learning materials, the relationships with parents; and the health and safety routines (Espinosa, 2002; Cryer et al., 1999; Rao et al., 2003; Phillipsen et al., 1997).

The structural quality contributed by the qualification of teachers attracts many researchers to study on its impacts to the quality of preschool education. The study investigating the relationship of teachers’ education, major and credentials with classroom quality and children’s academic gain found well educated teachers provide higher quality instruction in classroom (Early et al., 2006). Teachers must have deep understanding of child development, skills to encourage early learning and focus on individual children in order to support children succeed in school and life (Stoney et al., 2006).

The other popular studies on quality of preschool education are by investigating the impacts of structural quality towards the process quality (Phillipsen et al., 1997; Cryer et al., 1999;
Rao et al., 2003; Scarr et al., 1994). The major reason for the interest of the researchers to see the relationships between these two features is because some of the structural features are controlled by government and centres, so that amendment or improvement still can be suggested and applied for the improvement of the child care centres and preschools (Phillipsen et al., 1997). From the various papers, structural and process quality show to be related to each other (Howes, 1997). However it contradicts from (Scarr et al., 1994) which do not find any relationship on that.

A study by Burchinal et al. (2000) on the sample of eighty nine African American children, using both structural and process measures of quality characteristics reveals the advantages of classrooms that meet professional recommendations regarding child: adult ratios and teachers’ education. The children are addressed as having better language skills and better cognitive and receptive language skills.

Clarke-Stewart et al. (2002) study on regulable and non-regulable features in child care home as predictors of quality. The caregivers’ education and training; number of children in the child-care; and child-care licensed by government are the regulable features that are observed in the study. While the non-regulable features are the caregivers’ professional attitudes, experience, age, child-rearing beliefs; and mental health; and also number of children enrolled. The results reveal caregivers that are better educated, high level-trained and have more child-centred beliefs are related to quality provision in child care. On the other hand, caregivers’ experience, age; and mental health and numbers of students’ enrolment do not impact the quality.

Preschools that comply with high standard of quality, for instance the lower teacher-child ratio, the teachers are most likely engage in appropriate caregiving and provide
developmentally appropriate activities (Howes et al., 1992). This study which investigates three groups of children: infants (14-24 months), toddlers (25-36 months) and preschoolers (37-54 months) identifies the importance of child care regulation as part of predictors to influence the preschool quality. Children that are cared in classrooms that meet Federal Interagency Day Care Requirements ratios (infant classrooms with 1:3 or less ratios, toddler classrooms with 1:4 or less ratios, and pre-school classrooms with 1:9 or less) are more likely to be in classrooms good quality in caregiving and activities.

According to Dora (2006) the quality need in Hong Kong preschool education is the quality of practice. By understanding the complexity of knowledge and practices through the source of knowledge (e.g. teacher’s education program) and the context of knowledge use (e.g. cultural context either incorporating child-centeredness or teacher dominance), the preschool quality can be improved. In addition, teachers are seen as the main contributor to preschool quality because the teamwork between them and preschool institution leads to excellence.

A study on the perceptions of parents on the service quality of preschool education has been done between the middle-class European American parents and Chinese immigrant parents by Yamamoto and Li (2012). Teacher qualities such as teachers’ qualifications, experiences and roles of teaching good morals are perceived as important by Chinese immigrant parents. They also mention the importance of schools taking the initiative in reporting children’s daily activities to parents. On the other hand, the middle-class European American parents mention the elements related to independence and individual attention and school philosophy as essential element of high-quality preschool. The factor of socioeconomic differences also reveals low cultural and socioeconomic (SES) backgrounds of Chinese immigrant parents emphasize learning outcomes as quality of preschool more than the middle-class Chinese
immigrant parents. It is due to the low SES background parents feel the lack skills to educate their children and have to rely on preschools to help their children get ready for schools.

According to Iyamu (2005), based on Urevbu (1997), there are several factors that lead to decreasing quality of education in Nigeria. These include poorly trained, poorly paid and poorly motivated teachers; inadequate instructional materials and facilities; lack of basic infrastructure support; examination malpractice; and under funding of education by the government. Besides, Iyamu (1998) also mentions that education involves input-output equation in providing the quality of education. The input includes the number and quality of teachers, teachers’ motivation, relevant teaching and learning materials, instructional leadership and the quality of learners.

Associating with the impacts of elements of quality in preschools, the findings from Effective Provision of Pre-school Education (EPPE) and Researching Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years (REPEY) identify few elements that are beneficial for students’ achievement and development (Siraj-Blatchford and Manni, 2006). Some of the factors are warm interactive relationships between teachers and children, teachers that understand appropriate pedagogical content, preschool setting that encourages educational and social development; and trained teachers with high academic qualification.

Hewitt & Maloney (2000) find that the preference of Malaysian parents to send their children in private preschools is based on types of learning. The result shows formal teacher-directed academic learning experiences are very popular amongst the parents interviewed. On the other hand, the child-directed or play-type learning experiences are viewed unfavorably. Similarly, Miller (1999) finds that parents prefer the preschool provision to be formal
education. She mentions that this urges the preschool to oppose the direction of preschool curriculum that is ‘playing while learning’.

Abdullah (2002) describes several indicators of quality in early childhood education. According to her, the adult-child ratio and group size are significant in assessing the quality of preschool. She mentioned, the bigger the group size, the lesser the interaction between adult and child. Hence, the social stimulation and active involvement of children will become lesser. The qualification and trainings for teachers are also essential in assuring the quality of the preschool. The staff continuity, programs, relationship between adult and child, safe and healthy environment, stimulating environment and family involvement are also the indicators of preschool quality.

3.4 Measurement of preschool quality

Measurement of process quality in preschools relies on the systematic observations of a wide range of characteristics of the physical and social environments that children experience directly. The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS, Clifford and Harms 1980) and its revised version (ECERS-R, Harms, Clifford and Cryer 1998) have been most commonly used observational measures in studies of the quality of preschool environments (Cryer et al., 1999; Kalkan and Akman, 2009; Cassidy et al., 2005b; Scarr et al., 1994; Sheridan et al., 2009). The ECERS-R assesses a number of quality dimensions within preschool environments including: Space and Furnishings, Personal Care Routines, Language-Reasoning, Activities, Interactions, Program Structure, and Parents and Staff
(Harms, Clifford and Cryer 1998. Table 3.1 shows forty three items in seven sub scales of ECERS-R.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscales</th>
<th>Items in ECERS-R</th>
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| Space and Furnishings       | 1. Indoor space  
2. Furniture for routine care, play and learning  
3. Furnishings for relaxation and comfort  
4. Room arrangement for play  
5. Space for privacy  
6. Child-related display  
7. Space for gross motor play  
8. Gross motor equipment |
| Personal Care Routines      | 9. Greeting/departing  
10. Meals/snacks  
11. Nap/rest  
12. Toileting/diapering  
13. Health practices  
14. Safety practices |
| Language-Reasoning          | 15. Books and pictures  
16. Encouraging children to communicate  
17. Using language to develop reasoning skills  
18. Informal use of language |
| Activities                  | 19. Fine motor  
20. Art  
21. Music/movement  
22. Blocks  
23. Sand/water  
24. Dramatic play  
25. Nature/science  
26. Math/number  
27. Use of TV, video, and/or computers  
28. Promoting acceptance of diversity |
| Interaction                 | 29. Supervision of gross motor activities  
30. General supervision of children (other than gross motor)  
31. Discipline  
32. Staff-child interactions  
33. Interactions among children |
| Program Structure           | 34. Schedule  
35. Free play  
36. Group time  
37. Provisions for children with disabilities |
| Parents and Staff           | 38. Provisions for parents  
39. Provisions for personal needs of staff  
40. Provisions for professional needs of staff  
41. Staff interaction and cooperation  
42. Supervision and evaluation of staff  
43. Opportunities for professional growth |

Table 3.1: 43 Items organized into 7 Subscales (Source: Harms, Clifford & Cryer 1998)

The Assessment Profile (Abbott-Shim and Sibley, 1992) involves observational checklists of features of preschool environments, which create scales that measure the quality of the
learning environment, interactions, individualized learning, and scheduling. It is a quality assessment tool designed for a variety of childcare settings used to determine a program’s strengths and identify areas for improvement (Lambert et al., 2002; Abbott-Shim et al., 2000).

The Caregiver Interaction Scale (Arnett 1989) assesses the quality of teachers’ interactions with children that includes four separate constructs: sensitivity, harshness, detachment, and Permissiveness. However, the original CIS has very limited published or accessible materials relating to validity (Carl, 2007). The definitions and explanations of the items are limited only to what is written in the scale. The lack of standardization makes widespread use of the measure inconsistent and comparison to other studies suspect and lead numerous researchers have added descriptors.

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System or CLASS (Pianta et al., 2008) involves observations that assess the quality of the relationships and interactions in classroom along three dimensions- emotional support, instructional support, and classroom management. CLASS is different from other measurement tools that focus on the content of the physical environment, available materials, or a specific curriculum. CLASS is used to evaluate how teachers use the physical environment (including materials) and curriculum in their interactions with children. Research using the CLASS tells in early childhood education program quality the effective teacher-child interactions are the crucial ingredients for children’s social and academic development (Hamre et al., 2009). Thus it is suggested the professional development support to be designed and implemented to improve the quality of teacher-child interactions. Exhibit 3.1 shows the three broad domains of interactions among teachers and children which are assessed in CLASS.
There are also papers that categorize the service quality based on non-interpersonal and interpersonal attributes which are “hard” and “soft” quality attributes (Kim and Smith, 2007; Driver and Johnston, 2001). “Hard” quality attributes include “physical” aspects such as aesthetics, cleanliness/tidiness, functionality, competence, reliability and security. The “soft” quality attributes are characterized as being “between persons” such as attentiveness/helpfulness, care, friendliness, communications, commitment and courtesy.

There are limited literatures on Malaysian preschools in regard with service quality measurement. Due to this, the quality measurements used are only from Western studies. Different context of culture however may lead to different perceptions of service quality (Sheridan et al., 2009).

### 3.5 School Leadership

A report on concepts and evidence on school leadership by Bush and Glover (2003) for National College for School Leadership define school leadership as follows:

Leadership is a process of influence leading to the achievement of desired purposes. Successful leaders develop a vision for their schools based on their personal and professional values. They articulate this vision at every opportunity and influence their staff and other stakeholders to share the vision. The philosophy, structures and activities of the school are geared towards the achievement of this shared vision.
Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999) identify six major leadership theories in school institutions: (1) instructional leadership, (2) transformational leadership, (3) moral leadership, (4) participative leadership, (5) managerial leadership, (6) post-modern leadership, (7) interpersonal leadership and (8) contingent leadership.

Bush and Glover (2003) explain three phases of school leadership of American principals since few decades back: managerial, instructional and transformational. During 1960s and 1970s, most principals adapted managerial leadership style. In managerial leadership, leader’s focuses are on functions, tasks and behaviours (Leithwood et al., 1999). The formal position in organizational hierarchy reflects the allocation of authority and influence. At that time, principals were viewed as change agents and their roles were limited to manage the implementation of an externally devised solution to a social or educational problem.

By mid 1980s, the instructional leadership style was widely implemented. It is a style that focuses on teaching and learning and on the behaviour of teachers in working with students (Bush and Glover, 2003). The emphasis on directions and impact of influence to teachers towards effective and better teaching and learning process such as modelling, monitoring and professional dialogue or discussion are implemented in instructional leadership (Southworth, 2002).

In 1990s, a new conception of leadership which was transformational leadership emerged (Bush and Glover, 2003). Transformational leadership is about building a unified common interest between leaders and followers (Gunter, 2001). The central focus of this type of leadership is on commitments and capacities of organizational members (Leithwood et al., 1999). Leithwood (1994) conceptualizes transformational leadership into eight dimensions: (1) building school vision, (2) establishing school goals, (3) providing intellectual stimulation,
(4) offering individualized support, (5) modelling best practices and important organizational values, (6) demonstrating high performance expectations, (7) creating a productive school culture and (8) developing structures to foster participation in school decisions.

In addition to these three popular leadership styles, there were few other school leadership typologies that were plausible (Leithwood et al., 1999; Sergiovanni, 1984; Bolman and Deal, 1997; Dimmock and Walker, 2002; Bush, 1995) in leading schools. Sergiovanni (1984) identifies five forces of leadership:

- Technical- is derived from sound management techniques
- Human- is derived from harnessing available social and interpersonal resources
- Educational- is derived from expert knowledge about matters of education and schooling
- Symbolic- is derived from focusing attention of others on matters of importance to the school
- Cultural- is derived from building a unique school culture

Bolman and Deal (1997) on the other hand, identify four frames of leadership: structural, human resources, symbolic and political. From the interpretation of Bush and Glover (2003), structural leadership is consistent with managerial leadership, human resources is linked to the interpersonal approach, symbolic leadership is closely linked to transformational leadership; and political leadership is similar to contingent leadership.

According to Dimmock and Walker (2002), there are eight elements of school leadership that interrelate closely with school functions such as curriculum, educational structures; and teaching and learning. They are (1) collaboration and partnership, (2) motivation, (3)
planning, (4) decision-making, (5) interpersonal communication, (6) conflict, (7) evaluation and appraisal; and (8) staff and professional development.

3.6 Links between service quality and school leadership

The previous sections addressed the importance of many aspects of quality in preschool education. The educational setting in process and structural features are the crucial parts in preschool education in order to build up the quality. Therefore, the right management and leadership in preschools are expected to play important roles to ensure the high-quality outcomes for children and families (Bloom, 1996; Kagan and Bowman, 1997; Sergiovanni, 2009). According to the researchers, without an appropriate management and systems, high-quality interactions, learning environments; and performance at the classroom level cannot be sustained. As emphasized by Beare, Caldwell and Milikan (1989):

Outstanding leadership has invariably emerged as a key characteristic of outstanding schools. There can no longer be doubt that those seeking quality in education must ensure its presence and that the development of potential leaders must be given high priority. (pp.99)

Kagan and Bowman (1997) in their book Leadership in early care and education, list five faces of leadership in early childhood education which mention the types of roles of the leaders in managing preschools:

Administrative leadership: involves in the operational, day-to-day running or management of services. The jobs include preparing rosters, newsletters, excursion forms, budgets and compliance issues

Pedagogical leadership: ensures the quality of the day-to-day lives of participating children, as well as supporting and enhancing their growth, development and learning
Community leadership: involves demonstrating to the community that early childhood education and care is an important issue, and can determine a child's future success in life.

Conceptual leadership: revolves around the creation of new ideas to advance the profession. The leader needs to be prepared to think forward and 'outside the box'.

Advocacy leadership: improves the landscape for children and families. The leader has to seize strategic opportunity to move any issue (such as licensing requirements, salaries, and affordability of childcare) forward:

Focusing on the importance of leadership in schools, Sergiovanni (1984) introduces theory on five forces of educational leadership in school which are the technical, human, educational, symbolic and cultural forces. In his book Principalship: A reflective practice perspective (Sergiovanni, 2009), he discusses the leadership forces can be thought of as the means available to administrators, supervisors, and teachers to bring about or preserve changes needed to improve schooling. In his view:

- Technical aspects of leadership are managing structures and events; human aspects are managing psychological factors such as needs; and educational aspects are managing the substance of our work. By contrast, symbolic aspects are managing sentiments, expectations, commitments, and faith itself. Because symbolic leadership affects the faith that people have in the school, it provides the principal with a powerful force for influencing school events.

The report from Ofsted (2003) on What inspection tells us summarises the inspection on the link between leadership and management; and the quality of work of the school. It looks at the importance of leadership and management in dealing with particular aspects of the life and work of schools such as the teaching, the curriculum and its management, and school improvement. The school inspections and surveys conducted by Her Majesty’s Inspectors (HMI) evidence that there is a strong link between the quality of leadership and management
of the head teacher and key staff in a school and the quality of teaching. It confirms the good management and leadership could ensure a broad and balanced curriculum in primary schools and good subject teaching in secondary schools.

Furthermore, a study on preschools in Turkey that identifies physical conditions as a crucial matter mentions school leadership plays significant roles. Therefore principals are to be hired depending on their skills and experience in teaching and administering with the purpose of providing on-the-job training to teachers (Kalkan and Akman, 2009).

In Malaysia, public sector put performance measures as very important so that the public can have better services at greater level of efficiency (Othman and Rauf, 2009). These researchers align four main categories in school performance index in public primary schools which are (1) leadership, (2) measurement, analysis and knowledge management, (3) strategic planning and (4) examination results. The leadership factor is seen as one of the important elements in measuring the performance of one school. In leadership part, the organization’s senior leaders are examined by measuring four dimensions: vision and values; communication and organizational performance; governance and social; and responsibilities and ethical behaviour.

According to Othman and Rauf (2009), “vision and values” refer to the vision, mission, and values statements that were publicised to everyone at school. The second dimension gives meaning of the communication of the school with the various stakeholders in disseminating the performance in the school, such as teachers’ performance and students’ performance. The third dimension is the measurement on how safe and conducive the environment of the school to the students and staff. The last dimension indicates the adequacy of mechanisms in handling students’ disciplinary problem or problematic teacher. In addition, school principals
in Malaysia that enhance spiritual values are able to improve the school performance through understanding different emotions at work, expressing empathy and motivating the staffs (Abdullah et al., 2009).

According to Ramaiah (1993), the successful or the failure of one school depends on the head master or the principal. According to him, since the head masters and principals in Malaysia are appointed also from teaching background, they do not own much knowledge and skills in educational administration. Hence this leads to dissatisfaction among teachers, staffs and parents.

The researches on management and leadership in preschool education have been widely discussed in other developed countries such as United States and Australia. Over the past decades numerous studies have reported the effective leadership and management as contributing to quality programs and services in early childhood field (Rodd, 1997; Lower and Cassidy, 2007; Vu et al., 2008)

According to Rodd (1997), many practitioners in early childhood education perceived the leadership potential needs skills such as goal setting, decision making and problem solving. In her study, she states in today’s society the autocratic leadership style is no longer acceptable and should adopt cooperative and consultative style. She identified that the early childhood professionals see their work with children and parents and management of the centre as their primary responsibilities. Thus, due to the growing concerns of parents and other stakeholders about quality provision, it is important how the preschool education providers in leadership positions understand how their roles could impact upon the quality.

In her study, teachers, coordinators and head teachers are asked to identify their main roles and responsibilities in leading preschools (Rodd, 1997). The results reveals the respondents
ranked the roles accordingly as follows: managing and supervising staff (34.2%), contact with parents and other professional agencies (22.4%), staff support and development as well as mentoring new staff (15.8%), managing the budget and organizing financial resources (10.6%) and co-ordinating what is happening in the centre (10.8%). The study concludes it is important for the leaders in early childhood education to understand their roles due to the growing concern on the quality provision for children less than eight years. Another study by Dora (2006) shows vision building, collaborative relationships and quality of communication and participation are factors in effective leadership which lead to school improvement.

According to Lower and Cassidy (2007), the leadership and management practices of program administration are considerable to be a variable when attempting to raise quality in early childhood programs by building a competent workforce. Directors have an intangible role in setting the tone for the program. The vision and goal-setting role of directors provides the support system that teachers need to create quality educational settings for the children in their classrooms.

The introduction of Program Assessment Scale or PAS (Talan and Bloom, 2004) is beneficial to measure the overall quality of administrative practices of early care and education programs. PAS is designed to assess the leadership and management practices towards quality of early childhood education in ten areas: (1) human resources development, (2) personnel cost and allocation, (3) center operations, (4) child assessment, (5) fiscal management, (6) program planning and evaluation, (7) family partnerships, (8) marketing and public relations, (9) technology, and (10) staff qualifications. The seven-point scale generates guide and complement the widely used environment rating scales ECERS-R (Harms et al., 1998). This scale supports the notion that the leadership functions help the preschool
organization to affirm values, articulate vision and achieve the vision in order to carry out the organizational mission and achieve quality expected (Bloom, 2003).

Rao et al. (2003) use revised version of Program Assessment Scale (PAS-II) to evaluate structural, management and process quality. This scale evaluates 30 items (the original version is 58) following 10 domains: (1) Curriculum, (2) Teacher-child interaction, (3) Physical environment/setting, (4) Health/safety, (5) Food/nutrition, (6) Staff-parent interaction, (7) Staff qualifications and development, (8) Staffing patterns, (9) Evaluation and (10) Management/administration.

3.7 Summary

Through a thorough literature reviews in this study, the study on service quality in Malaysian preschool education were still limited. It is found that issues on service quality in higher education are usually being highlighted. In fact there is no substantial study has been done to study the service quality in all four types of Malaysian public preschools. This issue is seen as important for the researcher as these four government agencies represent ‘public preschools’ among Malaysians. Thus the quality provided by each of the agencies can influence the perceptions of stakeholders on all public preschools. This study therefore is very significant to see the strengths and weaknesses of the public preschools in order to provide better quality of education.

When linking the service quality and leadership roles in education, most literatures discussed on leadership at primary and secondary school levels. The literatures on leadership in early childhood education were not as popular as education in primary, secondary and tertiary
levels. The nature of preschools that stand as a small institution makes leadership aspects is seen as unimportant. However, refereeing to Talan and Bloom (2011), leadership and management in early childhood education is essential in assuring excellent education and effective program structure.

In Malaysia, many local literatures discuss leadership roles and styles in primary and secondary schools. There is no study has been done yet to relate the leadership roles with quality aspects. As there are many types of government agencies providing preschool education, the management structure are different. However the similarity among them is they are serving same type and educational objectives. Therefore, the roles of leadership in these preschools are expected to be similar.

From the literatures, there is a limitation in Malaysian context that look at the leadership particularly in preschool education. Preschool leadership is still new and has not widely discussed in Malaysia. With the government’s agenda in developing professionalisme among preschool teachers and upgrading the preschool curriculum, the management and leadership in preschool education should come along to ensure the education is well-managed.
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methods applied to achieve the objectives of the study. The choice of methodology is essential in a research as it contributes to findings and overall quality the study (Livesey and Lawson, 2005). This study focuses on the perceptions of various groups of stakeholders with reference to service quality in Malaysia’s public preschool education system. The study also aims to identify the relationships between the qualities provided and the leadership in preschools. In order to obtain rich and meaningful data, the researcher adopted a mixed methods approach: combining qualitative and quantitative strategies of analysis. Mixed method is defined as the class of research where the quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language are combined into a single study (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

As the first research objective of this study is to explore the perceptions of stakeholders on the service quality of public preschools in Malaysia, the qualitative approach is used. Interviewing is the best method for obtaining a clearer picture (Arksey and Knight, 1999) of people’s perceptions as well as the experiences of the key stakeholders regarding the service quality of Malaysian public preschools. Government officials who provide the mechanism for preschool education, public preschool teachers and parents who enrolled their children in public preschool education were interviewed. Through this approach, the researcher can understand the real phenomenon of preschool quality and determine any similarity and dissimilarity in key stakeholders’ perceptions.

With reference to the quantitative approach, the researcher used questionnaires to gather data from a survey. In the second part of the instrument, the respondents (parents and teachers) are requested to rank the level of importance of quality factors in preschool education. The
findings obtained through factor analysis can be generalized with the findings obtained in content analysis from interviews. In this study, the quantitative approach is also used to examine the second research question which is to find the relationship between service quality factors and leadership in preschool education.

Both qualitative and quantitative phases involved two key stakeholders: teachers and parents, in preschool education. Thus the research could benefit preschool providers, particularly those in the public sector so that better quality is provided.

4.1.1 Research problems

The Malaysian government is seriously concerned with the quality of preschools offered to children. The mushrooming of preschools with a variety of features and advantages means that the government is aware of the needs of public preschools to provide quality services (Dahari and Ya, 2011). In order to understand the appropriate provision of quality in public preschool education, government agencies, teachers and parents are the stakeholders who can best evaluate and explain what is occurring. This leads to the first research question of the study:

*What are the factors of service quality in public preschool education in Malaysia according to different stakeholders?*

In order to provide quality services, management and leadership aspects in preschool education play important roles (Talan and Bloom, 2011; Bloom, 2003; Rodd, 1997). In Malaysia, no study has yet investigated the roles of leadership in public preschool education in providing service quality. Therefore, this study does precisely to confirm the significance of leadership quality provision in the country. This problem statement leads to the following research question:
Chapter 4

What are the relationships between service quality elements and leadership in preschool education?

4.2 Methods used in the qualitative phase

4.2.1 The semi-structured interviews

This study applied semi-structured interviews as one of the key data collection methods. Semi-structured interviews involve the use of some pre-formulated questions, but there is no strict adherence to them. Thus, new questions might emerge during the conversation and such improvisation is encouraged (Myers, 2009).

In this study, the technique of semi-structured interview was implemented in accordance with the criteria listed by Glesne (2011):

1) *semi-structured* - the questions to be asked are specified
2) *open* - the new questions are developed to follow unexpected leads that arise in the course of interviewing
3) *depth probing* - all points of intersect are pursued with varying expressions that mean “tell more” and “explain”

The researcher adopted the phenomenography approach for this study. According to Marton (1992), phenomenography was developed to study people’s understanding of specific phenomena. The aim of phenomenography is to discern and describe different ways of people experiencing the world (Sjostrom and Dahlgren, 2002). The term “phenomenography” was devised by Ference Marton in 1981 in response to issues arising during the 1970s at Gothenburg, Sweden with the aim of describing differences in conceptions of learning situations (Osteraker, 2002). This approach is very useful for understanding the stakeholders’
perceptions of public preschool service quality from different perspectives and people’s different roles.

Marton (1981) explains the phenomenography approach with examples. He draws the reader’s attention differences between questions such as: “Why do some children succeed better than others in school?” and “What do people think about why some children succeed better than others in school?”. According to him, the first question is the most commonly adopted perspective a researcher uses about the world and makes statements based on it. The second perspective, however, is where a researcher focuses on people’s ideas about the world (or their experience of it). Marton argues that this approach is beneficial for discovering the different ways in which people experience, interpret, understand, apprehend, perceive or conceptualize various aspects of reality. Secondly, the descriptions of the second-order perspective are autonomous in the sense that they cannot be derived from descriptions obtained from the first-order perspective.

Here the use of phenomenography is the best choice as the researcher is interested in investigating the perceptions of various public preschool stakeholders. For instance, the government officials are asked about the bureaucratic challenges when providing quality preschool education. Furthermore, this approach is meaningful in that the teachers responded based on their experiences and everyday realities. Similarly to parents, their personal stories were interesting as every one of them experienced the quality of service differently. Therefore, by investigating through the phenomenographic approach, a ‘thick description’ and understanding of preschool service quality from the viewpoints of these three important stakeholders is obtained.

4.2.2 Photo analysis
Applying photo analysis is a valid and useful method for collecting data and it was first introduced by anthropologist John Collier (1967). Photo analysis reinforces the qualitative analysis of this study. Presenting photos, makes it possible to explain the written text and mirror the informants' responses regarding one issue or subject (Schwartz, 1989). Photo elicitation is based on the idea of inserting a photograph into a research interview (Harper, 2002). According to him, when using photos, a deeper understanding of one issue or matter is obtained and ‘one picture is worth a thousand words’.

In this study, a number of photos of preschools’ contextual matters such as school surroundings, classes and facilities were analysed. The rationale for analysing the photos as the second step of the qualitative analysis is to confirm the issues raised by the participants during their interviews. Some studies mention the importance of environmental and facilities elements in predicting preschool service quality (Mashburn, 2008; Erbay and Omeroglu, 2009; Read et al., 1999). However, if evidence does not consist of photos, this makes it difficult to capture or understand clearly what has been explained during the interviews. Therefore, through the observations and taking photos, better evidence can be provided.

The photos were taken by the researcher after the interviews were conducted. The researcher believed issues about the quality of preschools mentioned by the participants such as spaces for playing facilities, school location, safety, environment of classroom and teaching and learning facilities would be more clearly explained with photos of what was really occurring. Based on the observations on the preschools that were visited, the researcher chose the preschools that reflected the issues raised by the participants.
4.2.3 The planning of the semi-structured interviews

4.2.3.1 Sampling process

The number of participants in this study is twenty-four and they consisted of three groups of public preschool stakeholders: government officials, public preschool teachers and parents who enrolled their children in public preschools. As the study involved participants working in government agencies, the most effective way to get approval from the agencies to conduct the research was by applying through the Economics Planning Unit (EPU), Prime Minister’s Department. Employing this procedure, the unit issued a letter approving of the research to be conducted at the particular agencies. The first group contacted for this study were the government officials as they represent the public preschool providers and responsible agencies implementing and improving the quality of service of preschool education. In this study, four government agencies providing preschool education were contacted: (1) Ministry of Education (MOE), (2) Jabatan Kemajuan Masyarakat (KEMAS) or Community Development Department, (3) Jabatan Perpaduan Negara (PERPADUAN) or Department of National Unity and (4) Selangor State Islamic Religion Department (SIRD).

The government agencies were contacted through emails to clarify the objectives of the study and to request for an officer to be interviewed. The approval letter from EPU was attached to the email. After one week, the researcher made phone calls to confirm participation and appointment times for interviews. Then the appointment dates were set and their offices were chosen for the interviewing sessions. The researcher also requested the departments to provide lists of preschools that were located in Klang Valley as well as the names and contact numbers of the teachers. Finally, four participants, each from the four government agencies...
agreed to participate in interviews. The interview sessions took around one hour to be completed. The details of the participants are stated in Chapter Five.

The second group involved in this study is public preschool teachers. The group represents the professionals who provide and practice quality service in their jobs. The teachers were chosen randomly from the list provided by the government agencies. They were contacted through phone calls and finally, eight teachers agreed to be interviewed. The appointment dates were set and the interviewing sessions occurred after class time at their preschool workplaces. The demographic backgrounds of the teachers are stated in Chapter Five. It took between thirty to forty minutes for one interview session.

Lastly, the third group participating in this study includes parents of children enrolled in public preschools. This group is important because they are the decision-makers who select the preschools for their children. Parents also justify the important quality elements in preschools. In order to contact them, the researcher requested names and contact numbers of parents from the teachers. They were randomly selected from the list provided by teachers and were contacted through phone calls to participate in the interviews. Once the parents stated their consent to be interviewed, the interview dates were established. Twelve parents confirmed their participation and the interviews were conducted after class time at the preschools. The interview sessions took between thirty to forty minutes to complete. The background details of the participants are explained in Chapter Five.

The semi-structured interviews were chosen as it contributed to rich data and information on the perceptions of government officers, teachers and parents in this research. In addition to the questions list, new questions would arisen when the respondents mentioned some interesting points or had to explain in more details. This type of method is useful especially when the
researcher had to deal with different types of respondents (government officers, teachers and parents) as their opinions and responses towards one issue would be different.

### 4.2.3.2 Instrument

Preparing the interview questions meant examining the studies on this subject and considering some of the issues that needed to be clarified. The questions on perceptions of service quality in preschool education and the roles of preschool leadership when providing service quality were prepared by the researcher and discussed with the thesis supervisor. Once the questions were finalized, the researcher translated into the Malay language. The finalized list of questions (see Appendix E1 and Appendix E2) was used as a guideline in the interview sessions.

### 4.2.3.3 Interview process

All interviews were conducted after the respective participants confirmed their willingness to participate. The researcher met the officers from MOE, KEMAS, PERPADUAN and SIRD at their offices. The researcher went through some challenges in setting up the meeting date because government officials were always caught up at meetings and working outstations. During the first week of August 2010, the interviews with four officers from each agency were conducted. On the first day, the researcher conducted an interview with an officer from PERPADUAN. The next day, the interview involved an officer from SIRD. Then, on the third and fourth days the interviews were held with officers from KEMAS and MOE, respectively. During the interviews, the officers were already prepared to be interviewed as the researcher had sent them earlier the list of questions by email. After each meeting, the researcher requested them to provide related documents regarding preschool education and the list of
teachers’ names, their contact numbers and preschools’ names for the purposes of interviews and surveys.

The teachers were contacted by phone and were met at the preschools following school hours. Eight teachers (two teachers each from MOE, KEMAS, PERPADUAN and SIRD preschools) were met on different days from mid-August 2010 until October 2010. During the interviews some teachers understood the questions very well and responded as the researcher had expected. Some of the teachers had to be assisted and the questions rephrased to them so that they understood better. After the interview sessions, the researcher requested a few names and contact numbers of parents so that they could be interviewed.

With the names and contact numbers provided by teachers, the parents were contacted by phone. The researcher managed to set appointments for interviews with twelve parents who were met at preschools after school time. The researcher faced a few challenges as some of the parents did not clearly understand the questions being asked. However, after simplifying the questions, they responded well. Dealing with parents was harder compared to teachers as some of them had to be stimulated to talk and explain their perceptions.

The common procedure was for the researcher to welcome participants, introduce the purpose of the interview, and explain what was expected from them. All participants were given a copy of the introductory statement explaining the purpose of the study. They were also requested to sign the consent form which stated their consent to be interviewed and have their interviews recorded.
4.2.3.4 Analysing the data

According to Cavana, Delahaye and Sekaran (2001), analysing qualitative data is essential to understand the phenomenon being studied. In this study, the researcher managed to conduct twenty-four interviews. All of the interviews were conducted in the Malay language.

The first task in the analysis was transcribing the voice recordings into textual formation. The production of a written record of the interview is part of the organization and management of the data (Arksey and Knight, 1999). The transcription process was done by the researcher and took approximately five hours to complete one script. The typing process was done concurrently while listening to the recording. The scripts were finished transcribed within three weeks.

As the interviews were conducted in the Malay language, the researcher then translated the scripts into the English language. By translating at the beginning of the analysis, the researcher can save time when writing the analysis report.

In this qualitative analysis, the researcher adopted steps for data analysis as proposed by Bernard and Ryan (2003). According to them, analysing text involves five complex tasks: (1) discovering themes and subthemes; (2) describing the core and peripheral elements of theme; (3) building hierarchies of themes or codebooks; (4) applying themes— that is, attaching them to chunks of actual text; and linking themes into theoretical models.

Content analysis was conducted to analyse the text from the interviews. It is a process of identifying, coding and categorizing the primary patterns in the data (Cavana et al., 2001). According to Lasswell, Lerner and Pool (1952), cited in Neuendorf (2002), content analysis is a technique which aims at describing, with optimum objectivity, precision, and generality, what is said on a given subject in a given place at a given time. It is a useful technique for discovering and describing the focus of individual, group or social attention (Weber, 1990).
Furthermore, this technique makes it possible to examine the trends and patterns in documents (Stemler, 2001). In this analysis phase, the researcher focused on answering the first research question of the study, i.e. identify service quality elements in preschool education as perceived by the stakeholders.

After extracting the contents, the themes of the contents were identified based on the appropriate categories. The thematic approach can be implemented by grouping the factors in appropriate themes in order to organize data systematically and meaningfully. According to Glesne (2011), the thematic approach is the most frequently used technique in organizing data by generating a typology concepts, giving them names or using “native” labels and discussing them one by one in detail.

In this study, there are three key stakeholders involved in the interviews: government officers, teachers and parents. The analyses were conducted separately for each group of stakeholders. Finally, the researcher managed to obtain three lists concerning preschool quality elements obtained from the three groups of stakeholders.

The next step in the analysis is to categorize the related themes of quality elements into one group. For instance, the elements of ‘experienced teacher’, teacher’s academic qualification’ and teacher’s personality’ were grouped into the quality of teachers theme. The elements of ‘ambiance’, ‘safety’, and ‘comfortable’ were best suited to the quality of environment theme. At the end of the classification process, three models of service quality perceptions obtained from groups of government officers, teachers and parents were presented.
4.2.3.5 Data presentation

The data were presented according to the themes and sources of information. The researcher presented the data according to the themes of the quality factors. In each theme, the results were explained accordingly started with contents from the government officials, teachers and parents. The other following themes were discussed using the same format as the first theme. Finally, four major key themes emerged and these were (1) quality of teaching and learning, (2) quality of teachers, (3) quality of environment and (4) quality of facilities and equipment.

4.3 Quantitative approach

This section elucidates how information was obtained to answer the second research question: *What is the relationship between the provision of service quality and leadership in preschool education?*. Explained here are the structure of the research, descriptions of sampling, and the choice of the data collection method.

4.3.1 Research structure

In mixed methods research, concurrent or sequential data collection that includes both qualitative and quantitative components can be applied (Johnson and Turner, 2003). In this case the concurrent data collection was applied in the sense that the interviews were conducted concurrently when the questionnaires were distributed.

In this study, the researcher uses a number of quality items documented in *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised* or ECERS-R (Harms et al., 1998) in order to design questions for the ‘service quality’ section of the instrument. ECERS was first introduced in 1980 (Harms and Clifford, 1980) and was revised in 1998 (Harms et al., 1998). ECERS-R is used to assess global classroom quality. Scores range from 1 to 7 with 1 indicating
“inadequate” quality, 3 indicating “minimal” quality, 5 indicating “good” quality and 7 indicating “excellent quality”. In this scale there are 43 items organized into seven subscales (refer to Table 3.1). The seven subscales are (1) space and furnishing, (2) personal care routines, (3) language reasoning, (4) activities, (5) interaction, (6) program structure and (7) parents and staff.

For the purpose of the study, a number of quality items (process quality) in the ECERS-R instrument were selected and renamed- to make the instrument relevant. This study chooses elements in ECERS-R as part of quality investigation in the instrument due to its relevancy and applicability as it is internationally used.

The structural quality (factors that influence preschool quality indirectly) such as school reputation and objectives, teacher-child ratio, group size, teachers’ training, and teachers’ qualification and experience were added to the instrument. This was done to investigate their importance from parents and teachers’ perspectives.

As the objective of the study is to see how important the quality factors are, a Likert scale with five scores was chosen the following ranges: 1 indicates “mostly not important”, 2 indicates “not important”, 3 indicates “neutral”, 4 indicates “important” and 5 indicates “most important”.

Based on the structural and process quality obtained in the literature, seven major variables in the service quality part were formulated. These variables were defined as dependent variables in the study and were as follows:

1) basic facilities (Sussman and Gillman, 2007; Mashburn, 2008; Erbay and Omeroglu, 2009)
2) school staff (Rice, 2010; Phillipsen et al., 1997)
3) curriculum
4) daily routines and students’ interaction
5) program structure
6) school relationship; and
7) value of the school (Pianta et al., 2002; Howes, 1997; Memon, 2011; Barnett et al., 2004)

In this study, the leadership aspects in preschool education were the independent variables.

Based on Sergiovanni (1984) five forces of school leadership, the researcher came with five main variables of leadership aspects: technical, human, educational, symbolic and cultural.

Furthermore, using statistical techniques, the importance of service quality elements and their relationships with management aspects were determined.

### 4.3.2 Description of the sample and choice of data collection

The researcher aimed to obtain a large sample to reduce sample bias and improve statistical power because small samples compromise the ability to find statistically significant results (Beins and McCarthy, 2012). Klang Valley is an area in Malaysia comprising Kuala Lumpur and its suburbs, Federal Territory of Putrajaya and adjoining districts in the state of Selangor such as Petaling, Klang, Gombak, Hulu Langat and Sepang.

The aim of questionnaires distribution was to obtain responses from two groups of respondents consisting of teachers and parents. The researcher chose to hand the questionnaires to the teachers by meeting them face-to-face. Ninety-eight preschools were chosen randomly and were attended by the researcher to meet the teachers and hand the questionnaires to them. As a result, a total 120 responses from 46 KEMAS preschool teachers, 32 PERPADUAN preschool teachers, 33 MOE preschool teachers and nine SIRD preschool teachers were collected.

In order to obtain responses from the parents group, the researcher requested teachers to give the questionnaires to the parents. The answered questionnaires then were collected from the
teachers in the following week. At the end of this process, 535 responses from parents were successfully collected.

In this study, questionnaire survey was the best method to collect data from big number of teachers and parents. Through the permission from the ministries the teachers were working with, all of them were not reluctant to participate in this study. Hence, the researcher did not face problems to get feedbacks from them. Similarly with parents, the teachers were asked for help by the researcher to distribute the questionnaires to parents. The feedback responses were high as parents gave high commitment to teachers’ requests. Thus, the researcher realized this strategy worked on in collecting data from respondents.

4.3.3 Content of the instrument

A five-point Likert scale questionnaire was used to develop the development of the instrument. The scale then helped in collecting the data to evaluate the importance of quality elements in preschool education and their relationships with leadership in preschool. The ordinal scale employed (1-5) conferred quantitative information which enabled the researcher to interpret whether the respective quality factors examined are perceived to be important or less important among parents and teachers. The questionnaire used for the main study is attached in Appendix E2. The research adopted the Likert scale in this study as it permits a weighting of importance, produces homogeneous scales, and enhances the probability that a unitary attitude is being measured (Gliem and Gliem, 2003). Therefore, the validity and reliability are reasonably high.

The content of the scale was divided into three main sections: the background information, the data on service quality of preschool education, and the data on aspects of leadership that influence the service quality of preschool education.
1) **Background Information Questionnaire:** The first section gathered general demographic data from respondents, i.e. parents and teachers. The demographic information for parents includes gender, age, race, academic background, area of employment, household income and number of children. The demographic data gathered from teachers comprises gender, age, race, academic background and years of teaching experience.

2) **Information on service quality of preschool education:** The second section of the instrument was designed to gather information on respondents’ perceptions on the level of importance of preschool elements in evaluating the quality of preschool education. The question was divided into seven different sections, each investigating various themes. The scale was constructed to cover the seven elements namely: (1) basic facilities, (2) school staff, (3) curriculum, (4) daily routines and students’ interaction, (5) program structure, (6) school relationship and (7) value of the school.

Table 4.1 below shows the studies that have focused on the factors of preschool education service quality, and which the researcher referred to while developing the questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Quality factors in preschool education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 4.1: Studies on preschool service quality
3) **Information on leadership in preschool education:** The third section of this instrument was designed to identify the level of agreement of parents and teachers regarding the roles of leadership in order to improve the service quality of public preschool education in Malaysia. The leadership aspects in this instrument were mainly driven by Theory of Leadership Forces (Sergiovanni, 1984) in which five forces of leadership in school were aligned. The theory was chosen as it involved five important issues in leadership and management that were important to ensure a school’s best performance. According to Sergiovanni, leadership forces can be thought of as the means available to administrators, supervisors, and teachers to bring about or improved schooling. The five forces (Sergiovanni, 2009) are:

   i) *Technical*—derived from sound management techniques such as planning, organizing, coordinating and scheduling;

   ii) *Human*—derived from harnessing available social and interpersonal resources such as emphasizing human relations, interpersonal competence and instrumental motivational techniques;

   iii) *Educational*—derived from expert knowledge about matters of education and schooling such as providing supervision, evaluation, and staff development and developing curriculum;

   iv) *Symbolic*—derived from focusing the attention of others on matters of importance to the school such as visiting classrooms, downplaying educational management concerns; and providing a unified vision of the school through proper use of words and actions; and

   v) *Cultural*—derived from building a unique school culture that gives the school unique identity over time.
Table 4.2 summarizes the studies focusing on the roles of leadership in schools and which the researcher used to develop the questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Roles of leaders in school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hallinger and Murphy (1985)</td>
<td>Defining the school mission, managing the instructional program and promoting a positive school learning climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fennell (1999)</td>
<td>Positively transforming school organizations and staffs’ experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pihie (2002)</td>
<td>Providing an orderly atmosphere for learning and emphasizing students’ achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestine and Nelson (2005)</td>
<td>Supporting and promoting teaching and learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leithwood (1992)</td>
<td>Helping teachers to develop and maintain a collaborative and professional school culture Fostering teachers’ development Solving problems together with staffs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoy and Tarter (2011)</td>
<td>Creating a marketplace of ideas for teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2: Studies on roles of school leadership

The second and third sections of the instruments are the key studies in this research. These two sections are statistically tested to identify those factors that constitute preschool service quality and their relationships with leadership aspects in preschool education.

4.3.4 Development of the instrument

In developing the instrument, it is important to ensure that the questions designed are clear and easily understood by the respondents. The choice of language is important as it can influence the respondents in answering the questionnaire. If the questions are hard to
understand or are unclear, the respondents tend to tick any answers they like or leave the questions blank. This situation may lead to biased or inaccurate results.

Therefore, in this study, the researcher applied Bahasa Melayu (Malay language) as the medium for the instrument. Bahasa Melayu is the most appropriate language because it is the national language of Malaysia. The process of back-to-back translation was adopted in order to assure similarity in meaning between the English and Bahasa Melayu. Brislin (1970) suggests that back-to-back translation is one of the most reliable methods for developing an accurate instrument. The researcher first developed the instrument in English and translated it into Bahasa Melayu. Then, the instrument was handed to two colleagues so that they could translate into English. This translation was then evaluated by the researcher to find similarities or any mistranslation which may have occurred. Once the instrument was completed, measuring the reliability and validity of the final instrument was conducted.

### 4.3.4.1 Content validity

Validity is the extent to which a construct measures what it is supposed to measure. In validating an instrument, content or face validity is established in which the scale involves a systematic but subjective assessment of a scale’s ability to measure what it is supposed to measure (Hair et al., 2007). Content validity is applied in this instrument to examine the suitability of the instrument’s contents regarding the service quality perceptions and the importance of leadership in preschool education in providing service quality.

According to Hardesty and Bearden (2004), all the items in the scale are very important and must be content valid; hence the judgment of experts should be applied. In this case, the experts were the researcher’s supervisor, one academician (in early childhood education) from a university in Australia and two Malaysian university academicians (one in early childhood education and the other one in education management). All of them except the researcher’s
supervisor were contacted through email. The comments on choice of wording, structure and contents of the questionnaire were noted by the researcher to improve the instrument where needed.

A part from the experts’ opinions, the researcher also obtained feedback from respondents in the teachers and parents groups. For this purpose, three public preschool teachers and four parents were contacted by email to complete the questionnaire. The researcher asked respondents to provide some comments on the language and contents of the questions. The feedback on the clarity of questions was used to improve and reshape the final version of the questionnaire.

4.3.4.2 Test on reliability

A pilot test was done using a sample of fifty parents who enrolled their children in public preschools in the Klang Valley area. The parents were randomly selected from the personal contacts of the researcher and other parents suggested by the respondents (particularly from the same public preschools). All of them were contacted by email. The completed questionnaires were also submitted online.

From this group, sixty-two per cent of the respondents were female. Sixty-two per cent of the respondents also were between 30 to 39 years old. Most of them were the holders of Malaysia Certificate of Education or Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM), which means their highest formal education was fifth grade of secondary school. Thirty-six per cent of respondents were housewives and thirty-four per cent worked in factories.

Table 4.3 below explains the items for service quality part in the instrument and Table 4.4 highlights those items for the leadership in preschool education. The reliability tests then were conducted on these items.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| a. Basic facilities | 1. Premise with gates  
|                  | 2. First aid kit  
|                  | 3. Cheerful premise  
|                  | 4. Classroom space  
|                  | 5. Indoor playing facilities  
|                  | 6. Kitchen  
|                  | 7. Space for refreshment  
|                  | 8. Personal hygiene facilities  
|                  | 9. Outdoor playing facilities  
| b. School staff  | 10. Academic qualification  
|                  | 11. Experience  
|                  | 12. Interest  
|                  | 13. Personal appearance  
|                  | 14. Trained  
|                  | 15. Skills  
| c. Curriculum     | 16. Books and pictures  
|                  | 17. TV/video/computer  
|                  | 18. Blocks/building materials  
|                  | 19. Science materials  
|                  | 20. Mathematics/number  
|                  | 21. Group activities  
|                  | 22. Spiritual activities  
|                  | 23. Musical instruments  
| d. Routines and interaction | 24. Greeting/welcoming  
|                  | 25. Prepared meals  
|                  | 26. Use of toilet and sink  
|                  | 27. Health practices  
|                  | 28. Safety practices  
|                  | 29. Discipline  
|                  | 30. Communication between students and teacher  
|                  | 31. Interaction among students  
| e. Program structure | 32. Daily timetable  
|                  | 33. Free play  
|                  | 34. Group time  
|                  | 35. Group size  
|                  | 36. Provision for disabilities  
|                  | 37. Extra activities after school time  
| f. School relationship | 38. Frequency of information for parents  
|                  | 39. Explanation on goals  
|                  | 40. Report on students achievement  
|                  | 41. Face to face discussion with parents  
|                  | 42. Parents involvement  
| g. Value of the school | 43. School reputation  
|                  | 44. School fees  
|                  | 45. Cultural values  
|                  | 46. Religious/moral values  
|                  | 47. Number of students enrolled  
|                  | 48. School objectives  
|                  | 49. School environment  
|                  | 50. School relationship with community  
|                  | 51. Teacher-students ratio  

Table 4.3: Items in the service quality scale
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| a. Leadership in technical aspect            | 1. Incorporating students’ record in setting educational goals  
|                                              | 2. Incorporating students’ record in curriculum planning  
|                                              | 3. Preparing proper yearly planning  
|                                              | 4. Evaluating teachers’ teaching record  
|                                              | 5. Observing class instruction  
|                                              | 6. Observing students acceptance in class                                                                                                                                                    |
| b. Leadership in human aspects               | 7. Employing teachers with high academic qualification  
|                                              | 8. Employing teachers with teaching experience  
|                                              | 9. Emphasizing teachers’ appearance  
|                                              | 10. Providing teachers with professional development program  
|                                              | 11. Teachers’ salary  
|                                              | 12. Encouraging parents involvement  
|                                              | 13. Developing good relationship with parents  
|                                              | 14. Engaging with local community                                                                                                                                                    |
| c. Leadership in educational aspects         | 15. Providing adequate of learning resources  
|                                              | 16. Providing blocks and building materials  
|                                              | 17. Providing challenging science and mathematics activities  
|                                              | 18. Encouraging group activities  
|                                              | 19. Emphasizing practice of du’a (prayer)  
|                                              | 20. Practicing activities using gross motor (e.g. jumping, running, climbing)  
|                                              | 21. Practicing activities using fine motor (e.g. coordinating hands for writing, tearing papers, building blocks)                                                                 |
| d. Leadership in symbolic aspects            | 22. Delivering inspirational motivation to teachers  
|                                              | 23. Acting as charismatic leader  
|                                              | 24. Giving rewards such as recognition or bonus for teachers  
|                                              | 25. Naturally owned leader’s character  
|                                              | 26. Working together with teachers  
|                                              | 27. Emphasizing human relationship                                                                                                                                                    |
| e. Leadership in cultural aspects            | 28. Bringing culture in school  
|                                              | 29. Influencing school working culture  
|                                              | 30. Practicing job empowerment  
|                                              | 31. Understanding multi-religious and multiracial issues  
|                                              | 32. Influencing the culture of school environment                                                                                                                                          |

Table 4.4: Items in the preschool leadership scale

Using the sample of 50, the reliability of the scale is tested. The reliability of a measure indicates the stability and consistency with which the instrument measures the concept and helps to assess the “goodness” of a measure (Sekaran, 2006). One of the most commonly used indicators of internal consistency is Cronbach’s alpha coefficient. According to Pallant (2009) quoted from DeVellis (2003), the ideal value of Cronbach’s alpha should be above .70.
In order to test the reliability of the instrument, it is important to understand the inter-item correlation matrix so that the items are not measuring something different from the scale as a whole. As a rule of thumb, the inter-item correlations should exceed .30 (Hair et al., 2006). The reliability values (estimated by Cronbach’s alpha coefficient) for seven sub-scales in Service Quality Scale (SQS) and five sub-scales in Leadership Scale (LS) are indicated in Table 4.5 and Table 4.6. The values of Cronbach’s alpha in SQS are all well above the suggested value of .70, which is between 0.83 and 0.94. For LS the reliability values are situated between 0.89 and 0.92. As suggested by Sekaran (2003), the closer Cronbach’s alpha is to 1, the higher the internal consistency reliability. The results of reliability tests for both SQS and LS indicate the scales in the instruments are reliable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic facilities</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School staff</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routines and interaction</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program structure</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.104</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School relationship</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School value</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5 Variances and reliability values (Cronbach’s alpha) for the seven sub-scales in the Service Quality Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management of technical aspects</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of human aspects</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.024</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of educational aspects</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of symbolic aspects</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of cultural aspects</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6 Variances and reliability values (Cronbach’s alpha) for the five sub-scales in the Leadership Scale
4.3.4.3 Test-retest analysis

The final stage of instrument development is to test scale stability. The test-retest reliability using Pearson’s correlation coefficient is applied to measure the consistency of the respondents answering the questionnaire. High test-retest correlations indicate a more reliable scale (Pimpa, 2003; Pallant, 2009). This test investigates the trend or pattern of answering the questionnaires from the 50 respondents. At first, the respondents were asked to fill in the questionnaires. Then after one week, the researcher requested them to answer it a second time. The data indicate that there is a strong correlation between the scores for the two tests. The results in Table 4.7 show that all seven sub-scales in the Service Quality Scale have a high correlation and all of them are greater than 0.9: 0.978 for Basic Facilities, 0.976 for School Staff, 0.975 for Curriculum, 0.979 for Daily Routines and Interactions, 0.991 for Program Structure, 0.980 for School Relationship and 0.996 for Value of the School. Results for Leadership Scale in Table 4.8 also reveal high correlation scores for all five sub-scales: 0.991 for Technical Aspect, 0.991 for Human Aspect, 0.989 for Educational Aspect, 0.985 for Symbolic Aspect and 0.985 for Cultural Aspect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Correlation (R)</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic facilities</td>
<td>.978</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School staff</td>
<td>.976</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>.975</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily routines and interactions</td>
<td>.979</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program structure</td>
<td>.991</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School relationship</td>
<td>.980</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of the school</td>
<td>.996</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* *p < .01

Table 4.7: Correlations of test-retest analysis for Service Quality Scale (SQS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Correlation (R)</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical aspect</td>
<td>.991</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human aspect</td>
<td>.991</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational aspect</td>
<td>.989</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic aspect</td>
<td>.985</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural aspect</td>
<td>.985</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* *p < .01

Table 4.8: Correlations of test-retest analysis for Leadership Scale (LS)
4.3.5 Data analysis

4.3.5.1 The choice of analysis

The answered questionnaires gathered were sorted based on the categories of the respondents: teachers and parents. Using Predictive Analytics Software (PASW) Statistics version 18, the data were keyedin into two different sets of groups, i.e. teachers and parents. As a result, 120 teachers and 535 parents responded by answering the given questionnaires.

In this study, the researcher used both descriptive and inferential statistics to analyse quantitative data. The descriptive statistics were applied by finding the mean score of respondents’ demographic factors. It was used to describe the characteristics of the sample obtained such as proportion of gender, age, race, income and academic background. On the other hand, the inferential statistics were used by adopting three types of tests: (1) factor analysis, (2) t-test and (3) multiple regression analysis.

The first quantitative analysis conducted in this study was factor analysis. Factor analysis must be applied in order to answer the first research question of the study which is ‘What factors contribute to service quality in preschool education?’. For this study, an item which loads .50 or greater on one factor and with no cross-loadings greater than .30 on other factors was accepted for further analysis (Hair et al., 2006).

Independent samples t-test is conducted to compare the mean scores of two different groups (Pallant, 2009). This study compares the perceptions of service quality based on parents’ racial or ethnic backgrounds (Malays and non-Malays) and academic backgrounds (SPM level and higher than SPM). Similar to parents, the teachers’ racial/ethnic and academic backgrounds are used to compare their perceptions of preschool service quality. The p-value
that shows a value equal to or less than .05 indicates a significant difference in the mean scores of service quality perceptions between the two groups. The study also calculates the effect size as it is important to tell the ‘size’ of the experimental ‘effect’ (Thalheimer and Cook, 2002).

Finally, multiple regression analysis was applied to answer the second research question of this study which is to find the relationship between service quality and leadership in Malaysia’s preschool education system. In the analysis, the beta values (β) are compared because they indicate the level of contribution of each independent variable (leadership aspects in preschool education) to particular dependent variable (service quality element). The interpretation of the results is also based on the values of $R^2$ which tell how much of the total variance in the dependent variable (provision of service quality in preschool education) is uniquely explained by total independent variables (total of leadership roles).

### 4.3.6 Methodology limitations

There is still limitation in this study even though it has yielded important findings. From the perspective of methodological limitation, the researcher found that the concepts of leadership in preschool education were not specifically discussed during the interview sessions. More time spent with the respondents would have led the researcher in getting broader views on the issues and strengthen the arguments made in this thesis. It would be more interesting if the interviews were conducted with those in charge of the preschools and discussed in detail their responsibilities and the challenges they face in providing quality services in preschool education.
4.4 Summary

In understanding the factors that contribute to preschool service quality, it is appropriate to conduct interviews to discover the trend of answers from the various stakeholders. The results are confirmed by questionnaires that are distributed to larger number of parents and teachers. Moreover, the relationships between the provision of service quality and leadership roles in preschool education are best discovered through questionnaire distribution. This is due to the appropriateness of statistical analysis to be used in analysing the data collected.
CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS: FACTORS AFFECTING THE SERVICE QUALITY IN MALAYSIAN PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses on the results from interviews with three groups of people who have a stake in preschool education in Malaysia: government officials from public agencies that provide preschool education, public preschool teachers and parents. The researcher identified four key themes perceived as important in providing service quality in preschool education: (1) quality of teaching and learning, (2) quality of teachers, (3) quality of environment and (4) quality of facilities and equipment.

5.2 Description of the participants

During the data collection phase, the researcher interviewed four government officers from agencies that are responsible for preschool education, eight public preschool teachers and twelve parents with children enrolled in public preschools.

1. Government officers

In Malaysia, particularly in Klang Valley area, there are four government agencies providing preschool education: (1) Jabatan Perpaduan Negara or Department of National Unity (PERPADUAN), (2) Ministry of Education (MOE), (3) Jabatan Kemajuan Masyarakat or Community Development Department (KEMAS) and (4) Jabatan Agama Islam Negeri or Selangor State Islamic Religion Department (SIRD).

The first interview with a government staff member involved PERPADUAN. He works in a senior level position in a division of the Department of National Unity and Integration. The division is responsible for managing two units: Community Association (Rukun Tetangga) Unit and the Preschool Unit. The functions of this Preschool Unit are (Department of National Unity and Integration, 2011):
1. to plan, manage and develop PERPADUAN preschools

2. to supervise the progress of PERPADUAN preschools including the premises and equipment

3. to manage and coordinate teaching and learning materials and text books

4. to manage and review all reports and data related to PERPADUAN preschools

He is therefore required to have a good understanding of the development and functions of PERPADUAN preschools.

The second interview was conducted with an officer from the Ministry of Education. She rather identified her responsibilities in the Management Unit, Preschool Management and Early Childhood Education Sector in the ministry. The unit manages the MOE preschools in terms of policy implementation, identification of a school’s needs (facilities and equipments), and to coordinate the preschool programs. This person must manage and ensure that the preschool education provided by MOE runs smoothly. She works together with other professionals to identify the needs and any problem the preschools are experiencing.

An interview also was conducted with an officer from KEMAS. She is positioned in the Division of Curriculum and Supervision. This division is responsible for the management of KEMAS preschools and KEMAS childcare centres. The objectives of the division are (Ministry of Rural and Regional Development, 2011):

1. to prepare a conducive environment and space for preschool classes and childcare

2. to prepare facilities and equipment that enhance curriculum suitability

3. to implement early childhood education by following the National Preschool Standard Curriculum

4. to address training for professional development and training needs

5. to oversee the early childhood education program
6. to ensure teaching and learning materials are suitable for the curriculum

7. to encourage the involvement of local community in early childhood education programs

She is directly responsible for overseeing the teachers and that the equipment and facilities work properly, and are therefore effective in helping teachers with their duties.

The last government officer interviewed is employed at Selangor State Islamic Religion Department (SIRD). This department is concerned with religious matters relating to Islam. The interview was conducted with a senior officer in the Education Management Sector, which manages and organizes different levels of education including preschools, and Islamic primary and secondary schools. This senior officer manages the preschools in terms of teachers’ recruitment, evaluation and implementation of curriculum; and also provision of equipment and facilities.

2. Teachers

The interviews were conducted with eight public preschool teachers. Two of them are PERPADUAN preschool teachers, two from KEMAS preschools, two from MOE preschools and two from SIRD preschools. All of them were females and between thirty to fifty years of age. These teachers had been employed in preschool education for more than ten years. The researcher believed with their experience, they had a clear understanding of preschool operations and management matters, and consequently able to provide sufficient information and explanations during their interviews.

3. Parents

In this study, twelve parents were interviewed. Three of them enrolled their children in PERPADUAN preschools. Another three were parents who had enrolled their children in KEMAS preschools. Interviews also were conducted with three parents of MOE preschools’
students as well as three parents from SIRD preschools. Seven of them were female and five were males. They were between thirty-five and fifty years of age. Five parents were housewives while the remainder worked in administrative or manufacturing positions. Majority of the respondents earned around Ringgit Malaysia 1500 per month.

5.3 Interview questions

The interviews with the three groups of stakeholders aimed to get information and a clear understanding on factors contributing to service quality in preschool education. The data gathered will answer the first research question of the study which is *What are the factors contributing to service quality in preschool education?*.

5.4 The results

Table 5.1 summarizes the service quality themes that emerged from the three stakeholder groups when answering the first research question:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service quality themes</th>
<th>Government officials</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 5.1: Factors contributing to service quality from the point of view of stakeholders
The table above shows the list of contributing factors to service quality in preschool education in Malaysia as perceived by three types of stakeholders: government officials, teachers and parents. There are four distinctive themes identified: (1) quality of teaching and learning, (2) quality of teachers, (3) quality of facilities and equipment, and (4) quality of environment.

Based on these interviews, all three groups perceived **quality of teaching and learning** as important in preschool education. They mentioned *curriculum implementation* and *balance in academic approach* as essential towards proper provision of service quality in preschool education. The sub-theme of *curriculum implementation* discusses the effectiveness of the curriculum applied in Malaysian preschools.

Concerning the sub-theme of *balance in academic approach*, this had two different meanings. The first meaning is the balance between academic aspect and social activities. Social activities such as free play and group work encourage students to interact with each other in a good way, appreciate friendship and develop confidence, self-respect and responsibility.

The second view regarding *balance in academic approach* means a balance between academics learning and learning about Islam. A number of government officials, teachers and parents saw this as essential to teaching early preschoolers.

From the perspective of **teacher quality**, all three stakeholder groups mentioned teaching qualification as one of factors contributing to service quality in preschool education. The stakeholders stated that by having a *high academic qualification* such as a diploma or degree in early childhood education, teachers would work better at school and produce better results as well.

*Teacher’s personality* was also perceived as a quality factor in preschool education. Personality in this context means the behaviours or characters of the teachers that are suitable in managing students such as enthusiastic, hardworking, caring, interacting well with students.
and serving as a role model. All stakeholders mentioned personality of teachers as being essential in providing service quality.

The government officers and teachers also identified training for teachers could lead to higher quality workplace performance. Training schemes differ in that each organization has a different objective. The training includes teaching and learning skills, children psychology and teachers’ approaches in managing the class and the school. They believed that teachers who received frequent training would end up teaching students in a better way.

Teacher’s experience in teaching preschool education was also viewed as essential by teachers and parents. Teachers who experienced many years in the field were expected to deliver better service than teachers with less experience. With reference to the theme of teachers’ quality, job engagement due to motivation, salary and recognition also emerged as a factor contributing to better service quality.

The third factor emerged as factor contributing preschool service quality is environmental aspect. All three stakeholder groups of stakeholders mentioned that the school atmosphere is essential to enhancing quality. The evaluation of environmental aspects includes safety, cleanliness, attractiveness and suitability of the building and its location.

The stakeholders discussed the importance of location selection and safety of the school as one of the factors contributing to preschool service quality. They viewed cleanliness in all contexts of the school such as classroom, kitchen, toilet and outdoor areas. The attractiveness of the school such as beautiful murals and landscaping were also mentioned by the stakeholders as enhancing quality.

The last theme identified is quality of facilities and equipment. Here the stakeholders voiced the importance of adequacy and safety of facilities and equipment: desks, chairs, teaching equipment, computers and playing facilities to be provided. The teachers and
parents also mentioned the need to have *technological facilities* such as computers for teaching and school management purposes.

5.4.1 Perceptions of stakeholders

The analysis of the interviews is reported based on the themes and sub-themes identified from the content analysis. The key themes of service quality emerging from the interviews with the three stakeholder groups are categorized as follows: teaching and learning, teachers, environmental considerations; and facilities and equipment.

5.4.1.1 Quality of teaching and learning

For teaching and learning, there were two sub-themes identified by government officials, teachers and parents. The sub-themes are curriculum implementation and balance to an academic approach.

Curriculum implementation is an important factor that contributes to preschools’ service quality. The stakeholders mentioned the approaches used by teachers to apply the curriculum vary. It needed creativity and teachers having skills to make teaching and learning effective. Indeed the balance to an academic approach is defined as that balance between academic and non-academic activities. As the preschool education motto is ‘learning through playing’, the schools should use the concept of ‘play’ to deliver the ‘academic’ contents. Some participants mentioned a balance should be promoted in preschool education and this means between academic and social activities. Social activities can be encouraged through playing, having meals together and cleaning up the class together; and group work assignment.
A number of participants defined the ‘balance’ concept in another way. They viewed it as a balance between common academic knowledge and Islamic education by emphasizing the basics of *Fardhu Ain*. Learning the ‘basics of *Fardhu Ain*’ means learning the basic concepts of worship in Islam such as performing *solat* or prayer, fasting, purifying physical parts of human body and Quranic learning.

i) **Curriculum implementation**

The curriculum implementation in preschools is defined as the methods or approaches used by the teachers to apply the curriculum prepared by the Ministry of Education. Currently, preschools in each government agency have their own ways of teaching students, arranging the curriculum activities and instituting the syllabus in the curriculum. As there is no standardization on how the curriculum should be implemented, the issue of quality was raised by the stakeholders. The issue revolved around differences occurring in curriculum implementation even though all of the preschools were government-run.

In 2010, the National Preschool Standard Curriculum replaced the National Preschool Curriculum (Ministry of Education 2011) and it emphasized the *standard of content* and *standard of learning*. Standard of content is a specific statement about what the students should know and are able to do in terms of developing knowledge, skills and values. Standard of learning is a standardization of learning quality indicators that measures all the content in the curriculum.

*Views of Key Informants from Government Officers*

According to one MOE officer, the new curriculum justifies the standard guideline that teachers must use when measuring students’ learning outcomes. However, the standard curriculum must be supported and applied by teachers to achieve what the government wants.
Therefore, teachers must show evidence of enough preparation and have a clear understanding of the objectives of the standardized curriculum to achieve a high quality outcome:

“MOE has prepared the new standard curriculum to improve the quality of preschool education. The curriculum will be successful if the implementation is done effectively and correctly.” (Officer, MOE)

“Standardized curriculum could guide the schools to convey adequate and comprehensive knowledge. However, it also depends on how well the curriculum is implemented by the teachers.” (Officer, KEMAS)

The officer from PERPADUAN mentioned that curriculum implementation should be an important indicator of quality provision. In his view, when the Ministry of Education designed the standard curriculum for all preschools in Malaysia, it was the best way to ensure it was of high quality. He mentioned that there was no doubt that it was reliable because it was developed by experts in early childhood education. However, its implementation still varied among teachers:

“All public preschools have to implement the same curriculum provided by MOE. However, we implement it by our own ways. In PERPADUAN preschools, we have another important mission to be emphasized in the curriculum that is aspect of social integration among students from various background and races.” (Officer, PERPADUAN)

According to the PERPADUAN officer, the curriculum for PERPADUAN preschools was specifically augmented by elements and values of integration among students from different ethnic or racial backgrounds. Students were introduced to the variety races and culture in Malaysia in order to promote respect for each other.

The SIRD officer also mentioned the dissimilarities between their preschools in that their curriculum emphasized the importance of Islamic education. In her view, implementing the National Preschool Standard Curriculum (NPSC) provided by the Ministry of Education was not adequate if the students were not taught *Quranic* learning and basic Islamic education formally. Thus, other than using NPSC, SIRD provided their own curriculum in Islamic
education. The SIRD preschools were only implemented 30 per cent of NPSC as part of their curriculum.

“Seventy per cent of our curriculum is based on our curriculum that focuses on Quranic learning and Islamic education.” (Officer, SRD preschool)

Views of Teachers

The teachers emphasized the implementation of curriculum as essential in providing service quality in preschool education. They mentioned the importance of the correct approach in its implementation. The issue of languages also was raised up, namely the Malay and English languages as the mediums of communication and conveying education.

A forty-five year old teacher from KEMAS preschool stated that in teaching preschool, children should not be exposed to reading and writing during the first three months of the school year. She explained that the preschool is providing quality education if the students could master 3R skills: Reading, wRiting and numeRacy. She emphasized that the curriculum was comprehensive in that it did not only focus on academics skills but also social skills and students’ emotions.

Teachers stated that the teaching and learning approach in public preschools were totally different from those practised in private preschools where they put a high emphasis on fast track reading and writing. According to one teacher from PERPADUAN preschool, implementing the curriculum should begin with knowing the students’ characters first and socializing with them. In the first three months, the activities in the school should be fun and not too academic. They also agreed with the statement that introducing literacy and numeracy should not begin too soon after the enrolment.

“To ensure the capability of students, I need to understand their characters and acceptance at the first three months.” (Teacher, PERPADUAN preschool)

“As preschool is the first ‘formal’ experience in preschool education, teachers must develop mind and physical readiness among students before they are taught academic subjects.” (Teacher, KEMAS preschool)
“In my opinion, teachers must own ability to implement the curriculum effectively and fun in class.” (Teacher, MOE preschool)

In implementing the curriculum effectively, teachers mentioned the importance of the students-teacher ratio in one class. The teachers believed that a small ratio of students led to better quality of learning as they could spend extra time on each student in the class. The other teacher stated, if there were two teachers in one class, the problem of managing ‘fast-learner’ students and ‘slow-learner’ students would be solved.

“Having twenty five students in a class is challenging for me because the capabilities of them are different.” (Teacher, MOE preschool)

“It’s hard to follow exactly the module of curriculum. Some children are slow learners, so I have to take longer time to teach.” (Teacher, KEMAS preschool)

The other issue raised by teachers was the implementation of Malay language and English language in the preschool. The new curriculum provided by the Ministry of Education put a high emphasis on the English language as the ability of students to master it was considered an integral part of the quality indicators in a preschool. In contrast, some teachers believed that in preschools, the English language was not as important as Bahasa Melayu (Malay language). The reason was preschool education was the first formal education for students and they are just starting to learn reading and writing in Bahasa Melayu. It would be hard for students to master English at the same time. Some teachers believed when students could understand a few simple words and are able to build simple sentences in the English language, these would prove sufficient for the preschool level.

“Learning English language is important because it is a communication language used in the whole wide world. However, it shouldn’t be the quality indicator in preschool.” (Teacher, PERPADUAN preschool)

“It is good enough for preschools located in rural areas having students who are able to read and write in Malay language due to lack of teaching and learning facilities and low awareness of parents upon education.” (Teacher, KEMAS preschool)
Furthermore, several teachers admitted their ability to communicate and teach in English explained why students had poor English literacy and thus could not fulfil the government and parents’ perceptions of the importance of the language as a quality indicator.

“English language is very important to be taught in preschool. But I admit, teaching English language is my weakness.” (Teacher, SRD preschool)

“I can teach English by guiding them doing their workbooks. But, I am still not confident to communicate with students in English.” (Teacher, MOE preschool)

However, in reality, a number of teachers admitted that the English language taught at preschool level also contributed to the quality of preschool education. Realizing the steady growth of private preschools in Malaysia, public preschools should offer the best education. No matter what industry, the private sector always highlighted its advantage in attracting customers and the best staff. Similarly in private preschools, the trend of English as the medium in teaching and learning was always viewed as an advantage compared to public preschools. Public preschools that did not emphasize the English language lost points in the evaluation of quality.

Views of Parents

Parents perceived curriculum implementation as important by highlighting the outcomes of preschools and content of the curriculum. Parents mentioned quality could be evaluated based on the students’ ability to master the 3Rs skills. As most of the parents were not involved directly with the process of implementing the curriculum, the students’ skills and ability were judged as follows:

“I perceive quality in preschool when most of the students in the class are able to master 3Rs skills very well.” (Parent, PERPADUAN preschool)

“Before I select a preschool for my child, I asked some friends that had previously enrolled their children there regarding their children’s achievement in 3Rs.” (Parent, SIRD preschool)
Parents were also concerned with the workbooks provided by the school. After completing a whole year in preschool, parents expected that the workbooks would be completed by students and discussed with their teachers. This was the predictor for parents that their children had learnt at their level and what needed to be learnt. A parent of one KEMAS preschool’s student mentioned that when the teachers can complete the syllabus, this means they are doing their job perfectly. This was the indicator of quality of service that she looked for when enrolling her children.

“I would be satisfied when teachers manage to teach and complete the workbook syllabus at the end of the year.” (Parent, KEMAS preschool)

The statement is also supported by another idea:

“The completed syllabus in Malay language, English language and Mathematics is the sign of teacher’s quality performance in managing time in the school” (Parent, MOE preschool)

During the interviews, parents also mentioned the emphasis on the English language as one of the factors contributing to service quality in preschools. The government’s aim to get students to master the English language at all educational levels increased the expectations of parents that it would be taught at preschools.

One parent who enrolled her child in a PERPADUAN preschool mentioned that preschool children should be exposed to English in teaching and learning as well as other types of communication. She stated that students must get used to the language at the early age as it was not an easy language for non-native speakers to master. She believed the interest to learn English should be fostered early at the preschool level to eliminate the common Malaysian students’ perception that ‘English language is difficult’.

“English language is essential at preschool level as it is a good time to develop the interest of students on the language. I just want my child will not be left behind just because he is not good in English.” (Parent, PERPADUAN preschool)
Another parent of MOE preschool student also had a similar view on the necessity of the English language in preschool education. She mentioned teachers played a big role in exposing the students to the language. The parent believed that if the teachers communicate and give instructions completely in English and create fun learning for students, the English lesson would be more effective.

“I believe students can learn English very well when teacher communicate 100 per cent in English language during the lesson and be creative to make it an interesting subject.”
(Parent, MOE preschool)

In conclusion, the government officers, teachers and parents believed on the importance of effective curriculum implementation which concerned on the number of students in one class and the clear understanding of teachers in delivering the contents of the curriculum.

ii) Balance in academic approach

In this section, the researcher selected the term ‘balance in academic approach’ because the participants mentioned the elements that should be emphasized when preschool academic learning is considered. It emerged that the most prevalent answers was that preschool education must have a balance of academic works with basic Islamic education and social activities.

Views of Government Officers

During the interviews, several participants mentioned Islamic education as being an important part of the preschool’s academic program. For example, one participant from Selangor State Islamic Religion Department mentioned that the emphasis on Islamic education was essential because the main objective of the department was to develop Malaysian Muslims with strong Islamic foundation as early as the primary and secondary levels. For this reason, Quranic learning and basic Islamic education are the core academic contents in SIRD preschools.
“Balance between academic and Islamic knowledge is important. That is also clear in our religion, which we are commanded to master knowledge about Islam and other knowledge.” (Officer, SIRD)

The officers from other government agencies also agreed that Islamic education was essential in preschool education. However, the preschools provided by MOE, PERPADUAN and KEMAS did not offer formal learning as SIRD preschools do. Some Islamic practices such as reciting prayers (du’a) before class started and during meal times were done to introduce and expose students to Islamic values.

“We admit that our preschools do not offer subject on Islamic education or moral education same like primary schools. However, we realize that the subject is very important to be taught at the early age and has a high demand among parents.” (Officer, MOE)

“Even though there is no formal learning on Islamic education aligned in the curriculum, it is hoped that the teachers could find alternative with the cooperation of local community to offer class on Fardhu ain and Quranic learning.” (Officer, KEMAS)

Considering the balance with social activities, the officer from PERPADUAN emphasized that was one of the most important objectives in preschools. As PERPADUAN aimed to encourage integration among Malaysia’s different races, the social activities such as playing together, and working in teams will encourage respect and strengthen children’s tolerance and understanding of other religions and races. During class time, PERPADUAN preschools had a special lesson for ‘racial integration’ in which the students were introduced to a variety of races and religions, cultures and costumes; and how other religions celebrate their important holy days. These efforts developed a harmonious society in Malaysia by imparting a sense of respect and understanding in children.

“Based on history, the division and misunderstanding among races could cause a nightmare to people in this country. Our effort to insert the understanding into the curriculum hopefully will develop respect among children from different races and religions; and finally could contribute to racial integration.” (Officer, PERPADUAN)
The officers from KEMAS, MOE and SRD also mentioned the social activities that should be inserted in the academic approach. However, these social activities were not as emphasized in PERPADUAN preschools as they focused more on personal qualities. In these three types of preschools, most of the students were from a Malay background. They mentioned social activities such as working in teams in class activities and helping teachers could develop the personal quality of the students such as self-confidence, a sense of leadership and responsibility.

"Students will develop their quality of life such as being confident and responsible based on the social activities in school." (Officer, KEMAS)

"Students who are given the responsibility to help their friends will be more matured and can be a good leader." (Officer, SIRD)

“I don’t think it is enough to be only at school. Exposures to surroundings such as helping old folks to clean their housing area could develop students’ sense of responsibility.” (Officer, MOE preschool)

Views of Teachers

The teachers also perceived Islamic education and social activities at the preschool as being important in balancing the academic program. Since the teachers had a direct relationship with students, they could see the important elements that should be emphasized. The teachers stated that Islamic education for Muslim children and moral education for non-Muslim children should be emphasized in the preschool curriculum. Most teachers mentioned that religious education in preschools could educate the children to be well-mannered and reduce the number of discipline problems among students at primary and secondary levels.

“I believe religious education should not be separated with academics. Both knowledge are essential to produce quality students.” (Teacher, MOE)

“As teacher, I spend extra time to teach students Fardhu Ain (practices that are compulsory in Islam such as prayer and cleanliness). I want my students gain both common knowledge (stated in the preschool curriculum) and Islamic knowledge.” (Teacher, KEMAS preschool)
In SIRD preschools, it was the aim of the organization to emphasize Islamic education together with the curriculum provided by the MOE. This aspect was the most important element of service quality which the teacher claimed to be the competitive advantage of the preschools. Aligned with Islamic practices that are part of Malaysia’s culture, the teacher believed that explained why many parents wanted to enrol their children in SIRD preschools even though some of the schools did not have enough facilities.

“Parents nowadays are very busy and sometimes they don’t get enough time to teach their children with basic foundation of Islam. That is the reason why preschools that offer Islamic education are preferred.” (Teacher, SIRD preschool)

In the National Preschool Standard Curriculum, the ‘communication’ and ‘humanity’ concepts clearly emphasize the importance of socialization in children. A teacher from a PERPADUAN preschool supported that a quality preschool education should encourage social activities. She stated that such activities could develop self-confidence, a sense of friendship and sensibility among students. Students who enjoy the activities learn fast and have confidence in class.

“By encouraging the children to socialize with friends, they become more confident and excited to learn.” (Teacher, PERPADUAN preschool)

The teacher explained that the social activities did not necessarily have to be ‘planned’ activities. It appeared indirectly in group works, during meals time and playing time. All of the activities encourage spirit of teamwork and develop self-confidence. However, according to her, the ‘planned’ activities such as sports day or inter-preschool colouring competition also encouraged the balance between academic and social aspects. Similarly, two KEMAS preschool teachers agreed on the importance of social activities. They mentioned that children earned personal skills that sometimes parents did not appreciate or recognize, such as leadership skills and communication skills.
“Social activities in preschool could develop the leadership skills of students.” (Teacher, KEMAS preschool)

“I like to encourage my students to do activities together. They will understand the reality of life in which the sense of respect and responsibility must be together.” (Teacher, KEMAS preschool)

As stated by one MOE preschool teacher, students who were exposed to social and playing activities were smarter and could develop more personal skills especially in communication. Based on her experience, students who liked to participate in social activities had better communication skills and level of confidence compared to students who refused to participate.

Views of Parents

Two parents of students at SIRD and MOE preschools addressed the emphasis on Islamic education as being critical. They believed that Islamic education should be emphasized as religion shapes and influences an individual’s behaviour and character.

“I believe, if the religious education is emphasized, the children will grow as a good person” (Parent, MOE preschool)

“The emphasis on religious education in this school is the quality of school that I seek for.” (Parent, SIRD preschool)

Regarding social activities, nine out of twelve parents mentioned it was essential in the provision of preschool education service quality. The parents stated that socializing through playing and working in team were the contributing factors to balanced emotions and children’s healthy psychological states. They believed that besides the emphasis on academic matters, the right of students as children should not be taken for granted.

“Balanced learning and playing activities are important. A school cannot just concentrate only on academics as this will affect the child’s emotion and intellectual.” (Parent, SIRD preschool)

“Preschools that focus on academics only cannot produce quality children because they provide something that against with children nature. Playing is very important.” (Parent, MOE preschool)
“Balance between academics and social activities are important. I don’t want my child to excel only on academics. I also want him to be happy and fulfilled with joyful moments in school with friends.” (Parent, KEMAS preschool)

In conclusion, by balancing the academic approach with elements of integration among multiracial and multi-religious students; and Islamic education, the quality of Malaysian education is perceived higher by the stakeholders.

5.4.1.2 Quality of teachers

The data from interviews revealed five themes in teaching that are important in providing service quality in preschool education: (1) teacher’s personality, (2) teacher’s academic qualification, (3) trained teachers, (4) teacher’s experience and (5) job engagement.

i) Teacher’s personality

During the interviews the officers from government agencies, teachers and parents mentioned many times the importance of teacher’s behaviour, communication skills, attitude, and characters as part of service quality. According to Barr (1960), the teacher’s personality could be defined in terms of the characteristics of performance or behaviour. Therefore, based on the answers given, the researcher categorized these as ‘teacher’s personality’.

Views of Government Officers

The officer from PERPADUAN mentioned that a committed teacher in the classroom was significant in providing quality service. He defined full commitment as committing oneself to putting in the effort to delivering service in educating the children. From his experience of managing the teachers, teachers who were not committed in the class only created problems for children. At the preschool ages, the children had to be guided and monitored during the teaching and learning process. He stated:

To ensure the quality of teaching and learning, full commitment from teachers is essential. The children should be guided and monitored (Officer, PERPADUAN).
The officer from KEMAS noted that teachers had to be hardworking. She believed the hardworking teachers made many positive contributions to improved school quality. She stated that some KEMAS teachers provided extra classes to teach English class or religious class. The teachers’ efforts were valuable and that was the quality appreciated by parents. She added that teachers showing initiative and promoting ideas to make use of the spaces inside and outside of class also contributed to the quality of preschool education. Some teachers decorated the class and creatively created spaces for reading, recreation, resting and others. All of these teachers’ ideas contributed to joyful of students and parents as well.

“For me, the quality of the school relies a lot on the teachers. Teachers should be hardworking and use their alternatives for the betterment of the school.” (Officer, KEMAS)

‘Loyalty’ is the other aspect that seemed important in providing quality service in preschool education. It refers to teachers’ loyalty to stay for a long time in the organization. The PERPADUAN officer mentioned that if teachers changed frequently, the quality of teaching and learning was compromised because strong and good bonding between teachers and students would take a long time to achieve.

“Frequent changes of teachers affect quality of the preschool because they might distract the teaching and learning process and children’s acceptance.” (Officer, PERPADUAN)

“Teachers who stay long time in their job could increase the quality of teaching as they gained experience from it.” (Officer, SIRD)

Views of Teachers

With reference to personality, teachers mentioned that it reflected the quality and professionalism of the school. The communication style, dressing and personal outlook of the teachers were evaluated by the parents so they could choose the best preschools for their children.
The MOE preschool teacher admitted that the attitude during interaction with students and parents was important. She stated that good interaction skills with students made the students comfortable and happy in the classroom. She also believed that parents observed the teacher’s attitude and behaviour before they put their trust and confidence on the teacher’s credibility:

“One of the parents told that her child put trust more on me rather than the mother. Knowing that, I believe good personality is very important as it influences the children as well as the parents.” (Teacher, MOE preschool)

Furthermore the SIRD preschool teacher mentioned that communication with parents and school leaders was important. A warm relationship with the stakeholders enhanced the quality of the preschool. Teachers who maintained a good relationship usually managed to encourage parents to become involved in school activities. Teachers with good personalities were able to encourage parents to contribute to reading programs, meetings and fund donations. The school’s management also faced less difficulties or complaints from parents due to teachers’ behaviour or attitude.

“Teacher’s personality contributes to service quality of the school as it influences the perceptions of many stakeholders such as parents and school management.” (Teacher, SIRD preschool)

One PERPADUAN preschool teacher stated that to be a role model to students is to do not only with behaviour but also with personal appearance. One’s personal appearance also could influence the perception of parents regarding teachers. By wearing clean and neat clothes, she is promoting the idea that students must stay clean all the time.

A quality preschool is not only emphasized on academic achievement but also the positive values that could be fertilized in it (Teacher, PERPADUAN preschool).

Views of Parents
Based on the interviews, three parents whom enrolled their children in KEMAS, SIRD and PERPADUAN preschools mentioned that attitude of teachers as one of contributing factors to service quality.

A mother of a student from KEMAS preschool stated that she evaluated the teacher’s attitude while communicating with students and parents. She asserted that teachers must show good values to students because the children always put trust in their teachers and replicate their actions. In her opinion, the children at the preschool ages viewed their teacher as the most respected person in the classroom and must be listened to. Thus, the good behaviour of teacher is essential.

*When selecting my child’s preschool, I look at the appearance and the way the teacher behaves and interacts with parents and kids. Teacher’s personality influences much on children’s behaviour and emotion (Parent, KEMAS preschool).*

One parent from the SIRD preschool shared the same opinion. Friendliness and politeness were characteristics of good teachers and she prioritized these when evaluating the service quality of one preschool. She believed that teacher’s personality was important because students always perceived the teachers as role models:

*Teachers’ attitude plays big role in providing quality service in preschool. Their behaviour could influence the children’s morality and attitude (Parent, SIRD preschool)*

One parent of a PERPADUAN preschool student stated that teachers with a good attitude and hardworking were important in providing preschool service quality. She mentioned that the teacher’s personality and attitude would be the most important aspects to consider. Teachers must not communicate rudely and they should have a high level of patience with a variety of children’s behaviour in the classroom. Besides, the concerns of teachers for students who were weak in academic subjects by offering extra classes were perceived as adding a quality element in the school:
Teachers with good attitude and hardworking could give big influence to students’ behaviour and achievement. (Parent, PERPADUAN preschool)

From the analysis, all stakeholders perceived the personality of teachers as essential. In assuring quality service, teachers should be committed with their jobs, hardworking, loyal and be role models to students.

ii) Teacher’s academic qualification

All four officers from government agencies (MOE, KEMAS, PERPADUAN and SIRD) asserted that good qualifications in preschool education were essential in providing service quality. This was agreed by four out of eight teachers and four out of twelve parents. ‘High academic qualification’ in this context means the teachers had gone through the right sort of education at tertiary level and gained their diploma or degree preferably in early childhood education.

Views of Government Officers

A lack of qualified teachers with high academic grades or expertise was raised by officers from the government agencies. The officer from KEMAS mentioned that the academic precondition when applying for a preschool teacher post was Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) or Malaysian Certificate of Education. SPM is an examination that is compulsory in the fifth year for secondary school students.

The officer from PERPADUAN mentioned that due to the introduction of the National Key Result Area (NKRA) on 11 July 2009, the government started to send teachers to further studies. He explained this was one of the government’s reasons for improving the quality of public preschools in Malaysia:
The high academic qualified teachers learn all important elements in preschool such as pedagogical skills, psychology and lots more. These teachers could perform better in class and contribute to quality service of the school. (Officer, KEMAS)

We are now in the process of upgrading the teachers’ qualification which is purposely aiming to increase the skills and quality of teaching among teachers. (Officer, PERPADUAN)

Although we don’t sponsor teachers to further studies, we encourage them to do so because we believe the knowledge they gained could increase the teaching quality of the teachers. (Officer, SIRD)

It is our policy to hire preschool teachers with diploma and above in education. (Officer, MOE)

Indeed, there are significant differences in terms of academic qualifications that preschool teachers have, and this reflects the needs of different government agencies. In MOE preschools, most of the teachers have degree or diploma qualifications. Before they were qualified to become teachers, they had to undergo one-year courses for the Diploma in Education. However, most of preschool teachers employed in the Department of National Unity (PERPADUAN), Community Development Department (KEMAS) and Selangor State Islamic Religion Department (SIRD) preschools were SPM holders.

“Academic qualification in early childhood education is essential for all preschool teachers because they learned every developmental aspect of young aged children that are very important and critical such as the children’s physical, mental and psychological development.” (Officer, MOE)

“There are teachers with no high academic qualification that can teach students very well and effectively. However, many parents rely on credentials to judge the quality of the education.” (Officer, PERPADUAN)

“I think it is the time for all public preschools to increase the prerequisite of teachers’ academic qualification level so that our preschools are not perceived as offering lower quality of education than private preschools.” (Officer, KEMAS)

Views of Teachers

Four teachers, each from PERPADUAN, KEMAS, MOE and SRD preschools mentioned that academic qualification was important in providing good quality preschool education. One
teacher from PERPADUAN preschool who has an SPM stated that an academic qualification was important. In her experiences she had struggled to obtain the knowledge and skills required for teaching early childhood education. She asserted that teachers with high academic qualification particularly in early childhood education were very lucky as they were given proper education at tertiary level:

Teachers with high academic qualification have more preparation to become a preschool teacher because they underwent formal education on early childhood education. They can contribute a lot to quality of preschool education. (Teacher, PERPADUAN preschool)

The teachers mentioned the three or four years of study in early childhood education could develop the understanding they needed and prepare them for the real world of teaching. They believed all the theories and practices they learnt during their study were very useful in the preparation to be teachers. This was supported by KEMAS and MOE preschool teachers:

Children nowadays are very smart and clever. They know and like to ask many things. I believe by learning the pedagogical and psychological development of children, we could get more ideas on how to handle and manage the children during the real-time teaching. (Teacher, KEMAS preschool)

I think high academic qualification is essential. We are more exposed to education knowledge as we learned skills in managing the class, skills to interact with students, and also the theories in early childhood education. (Teacher, MOE preschool)

One SIRD preschool teacher also agreed that a high academic qualification in early childhood education was important in teaching preschools. However, as the SIRD teachers are hired by the state government (Selangor State), they do not receive any financial support from the federal government to further studies like those teachers in MOE, PERPADUAN and KEMAS preschools. In SIRD preschools, this depends on teachers’ initiatives and ability to pay their own study fees.

Most of us are interested to pursue studies. However, not all of us managed to do it as we are nor sponsored for that. (Teacher, SIRD preschool)
Views of Parents

Seven out of twelve parents mentioned high academic qualification of teachers as important in providing a good level of service quality in preschool education. A mother who enrolled her child in an MOE preschool claimed that high academic qualification was essential for delivering quality service in preschool. She believed when the teachers were academically qualified, this reflected the fact they could understand the children based on theories and practical aspects of teaching:

When I know that the teacher is a degree or diploma holder especially in early childhood education, I am more confident that she could perform her job as preschool teacher very well. (Parent, MOE preschool)

A similar perception was mentioned by another parent of a KEMAS preschool’s student. He believed that teachers with high academic qualifications were able to apply various approaches in educating the children because they had gone through the formal learning in early childhood education:

Teachers with high academic qualification are well prepared as they learned from the basics until the implementation of education for the children. (Parent, KEMAS preschool)

The other parents of MOE and PERPADUAN preschools’ students mentioned that a high academic qualification was essential to develop a high quality future younger generation in Malaysia. The parents believed by hiring teachers who have studied at higher education institutions, that was actually an advantage for the preschools as the teachers would realize how crucial the preschool education was:

I think teachers who studied at diploma or degree levels on early childhood education could get clearer picture on what should be delivered in preschool because they learnt courses in detail. (Parent, MOE preschool)

I believe teachers who are well educated could encourage these young children to be ambitious to learn until at the highest level. (Parent, PERPADUAN preschool)
In summary, the stakeholders perceived academic qualification as important by putting diploma or bachelor degree holders in early childhood education as preference to become preschool teachers.

*iii) Trained teachers*

From the interviews, a number of government officers and teachers mentioned trained teachers were essential as a contributing factor of preschool service quality. The context of ‘trained’ was defined as training or courses on early childhood education that were attended by teachers. In Malaysian preschools, training was separately provided by the government agencies. Issues such as training syllabus, training philosophy, academic level of trainers, duration of training and venues were raised due to dissimilarities between the agencies’ training programs.

*Views of Government Officers*

Officers from KEMAS, PERPADUAN and SIRD mentioned the importance of teachers’ training so that service quality in preschool education could be provided. According to an officer from KEMAS, once appointed, their teachers had to undergo six months basic training or pre-service training at the KEMAS training institute to receive the Certificate of Early Childhood Education. The KEMAS preschool teachers also had to attend in-service training such as English language and computer literacy courses. Given the limitations of KEMAS trainers, the organization hired trainers from the Curriculum Development Centre at the Ministry of Education, Health Department, local universities and Fire Department based on the needs of training modules.

*Training for teachers is important to assure the teachers clearly understand and know their responsibilities and educational process in preschools. (Officer, KEMAS)*
The officer from PERPADUAN mentioned that PERPADUAN preschool teachers attended in-service training during school holidays. The training consisted of courses on: basic skills as teachers and assistant teachers; improving children’s multiple intelligence; management of class school activities; healthy and safe meal preparation; and those on excellent working culture and self-development. Usually each course was held two or three times over the course of a year. The officer stated some of these courses were collaborative efforts with the Division of Teachers’ Education, Ministry of Education. The PERPADUAN participant agreed that the organization faced several challenges when conducting training independently such as the lack of expert trainers:

*PERPADUAN offers ongoing trainings that are essential for the preschool teachers in order to develop more skills and lead them to be creative. However we still need the experts from MOE in conducting some of the trainings.* (Officer, PERPADUAN)

Like the other government officers, the officer from Selangor Islamic Religion Department (SIRD) mentioned frequently the importance of teachers’ training in providing quality service at preschools. However, she admitted that the organization faced challenges in that short-term training courses were only conducted twice a year which she perceived as being inadequate. As the officer held a high position in one sector of the Selangor Islamic Religion Department, she believed both pre-service and in-service training were critical in SIRD preschools in order to develop the skills and knowledge of teachers:

*SIRD perceives the issue on teacher’s training as crucial because we believe teachers without training will easily lost their direction to teach students effectively. Realizing the matter, we plan to improve the training programs for our teachers from time to time.”* (Officer, SIRD)

*Views of Teachers*

During the interviews, four out of eight teachers highlighted the importance of teachers’ training as a factor contributing to better service quality of preschool education. One MOE teacher stated that training and courses were beneficial as they learned new approaches in
managing children. She mentioned it was not an easy job to handle the students even though the class duration was only three and half hours. As the children easily became bored with one activity, the teacher had to be creative to keep the children’s attention and use the time effectively:

*I love attending courses and trainings because I could learn new approaches and knowledge that can be applied at school.* (Teacher, MOE preschool)

The other teachers from MOE and KEMAS preschools also agreed with this idea by stating the positive impacts that they received from the training. The teachers learnt about pedagogy and children psychology and obtained better ideas in managing the class and dealing with children:

*Training that I attended taught us skills to understand the students and methods to teach effectively.* (Teacher, MOE preschool)

*Training is very beneficial. We gain ideas to be more creative in approaching and teaching children. The creative ideas help us to teach and manage the class more effective.* (Teacher, KEMAS preschool)

Furthermore, one PERPADUAN preschool teacher agreed that her performance in the classroom improved after attending occasional courses. The courses taught her to manage the class and the student database more systematically:

*After attending several courses on school activities management, I realize, I could manage the school more systematically* (Teacher, PERPADUAN preschool).

The government officers and teachers perceived trainings and courses for teachers as one of factors contributing to quality service in preschool education. Through trainings, new knowledge and skills could be shared and learned among teachers.

iv) Teachers’ experience

In analysing the data derived from the interviews, the researcher realized teachers and parents mentioned ‘experienced teacher’ frequently as a factor contributing to the quality of preschool
education. From their explanations, most teachers and parents defined ‘experienced’ as being teachers for young children for at least ten years. Teaching experience is an advantage for teachers in the sense that it cannot be owned or obtained without the teacher going through the practice of teaching. It is therefore believed that having long-term experience could lead to service quality of preschool education.

**Views of Teachers**

According to one PERPADUAN preschool teacher, experience can differentiate the teaching quality of teachers. She stated that the term ‘experienced’ was not limited only to the preschool teacher. It involved the experience in managing and handling young children informally such as being a babysitter or engaging in welfare activities for long period of time. She remarked:

*Experience that I gained through having informal education with young children is very useful. I learnt the skills to approach and interact with children through my past experiences (Teacher, PERPADUAN preschool)*

One KEMAS preschool teacher who experienced teaching at a preschool for more than twenty years mentioned that having much experience helped her to deliver quality service as required by parents. She explained that many parents at her preschool area requested to enrol their children because they believed she had the credibility to teach due to her sheer experience. Indeed, she admitted that she learnt a lot about the young children’s psychology and pedagogy through experience:

*I think having long-time experience in teaching preschool is an advantage for me because I can understand what the parents expect from the preschool and what should I deliver to the students (Teacher, KEMAS preschool)*

**Views of Parents**

A mother of one KEMAS preschool student believed teachers with long-term teaching experience were more confident in coping with a variety of challenges and problems that were
caused by students. A good quality she looked for in a preschool was the ability of the teacher to educate and enhance good behaviour in children:

I believe teachers with long-term teaching experience know the best approach to use with different types of students’ behaviour. (Parent, KEMAS preschool)

According to a parent of one student at an MOE preschool, the more time the teachers are involved in preschool education, the more teaching, interacting and managing skills they have. That was the reason why she was so selective in choosing preschools. Word-of-mouth was the key source of information that she received in making her choice. She mentioned that she received the information from her friends who had children in preschools and most of them evaluated the teachers’ experience as essential.

I don’t want to make wrong choice in selecting preschool. When my friends told me the teacher at this preschool was experienced and owned skills to approach and handle young students, I have no doubt to choose the school. (Parent, MOE preschool)

Another parent of a PERPADUAN preschool student expressed his concern about teachers with years of experience as the teachers were dealing with young children. He stated that it was not easy to approach children from different backgrounds without having skills and understanding their psychology and emotion. He believed, teachers with at least ten years experience working in preschool had the skills to comprehend children’s needs and psychology. Therefore, such a teacher would know the best approach to make the class effective and this ability contributes to better quality teaching and learning. He stated:

In my opinion, teachers with long term experience own good skills in understanding the children’s psychology (Parent, PERPADUAN preschool)

To summarize, teachers and parents believed the experience in teaching was part of causes of preschool service quality as they were familiar with students’ behaviour and knew many approaches to tackle them.
v) **Job engagement**

The other interesting element that the researcher identified from the data analysis is the factor of ‘job engagement’. The researcher chose to categorize the participants’ answers with this term because the teachers mentioned that responsibility, commitment, interest and empathy were important variables for preschool teachers since they affected their ability to work at school. The findings also revealed that only teachers mentioned this element as the factor contributing to service quality. The researcher believed this aspect was made only by teachers because it was they who experienced the reality of working in preschool education.

*Views of Teachers*

During the interviews, the teachers stated that their engagements were influenced by their school’s mission and vision, students and the nature of the teaching profession. These conditions were linked to teachers’ understanding of responsibility, maintaining a high interest in their jobs and positive working conditions.

Teachers mentioned when they understood the school’s mission and vision, they would engage with their jobs because they understood their responsibility to achieve the objectives and missions of the preschools. One Malay PERPADUAN preschool teacher, with many Indian students stated that she enjoyed teaching at the school because she clearly understood the aim and mission of the school - which was to promote integration among students from different races and ethnicities. She believed her small contribution could lead to big impact on racial integration in Malaysia:

> I really attached with the school mission that is to promote integrity among students from different backgrounds and races. I believe my full commitment could achieve the school’s mission and contribute to quality aimed. (Teacher, PERPADUAN preschool)

Similarly, a teacher from a SIRD preschool engaged with her job because she understood the school’s objectives. This was to emphasize Islamic education and practices, and she stated
that sincerity in teaching the students was important. She mentioned that being sincere and believing that her effort would be rewarded by God, enabled her to be very enthusiastic and happy to provide extra time to teach her students on *Fardhu Ain* (the practices that are obligatory to be performed by Muslim, e.g. perform prayer, ablution and learn the *Quran*).

Four out of eight teachers believed that when they were happy with the school management and the leadership of school principals or school leaders, they worked better. The MOE preschool teacher stated that unstressed working conditions allowed her and other teachers to work better without the extra pressure. She claimed it was very important for the teachers to not work under pressure because they were dealing with young children so they needed extra patience and focus:

> I believe my extra effort and patience will be paid with my students’ achievement in academic and the most important one is I could shape them with good behaviour and attitude. I don’t feel tired at all because I am happy with the school management that has kind and considerable leader (Teacher, MOE preschool)

A teacher from SIRD preschool has a similar idea:

> If the teachers sincerely put high commitment to teach students and be hardworking, I believe the quality of teaching and learning would be better. And most of the teachers could be like that when they are happy with their working environment (Teacher, SIRD preschool)

The data revealed that the teachers also mentioned their interest in the nature of the job as providing better service quality. One teacher from a KEMAS preschool stated some teachers naturally loved young children. It was an advantage for a preschool as this type of teachers usually had high determination and patience to educate these students.

> I love my job. Sometimes I run extra class to students who are weak in study. I really satisfied when my students succeed.” (Teacher, KEMAS preschool)

*PERPADUAN* and MOE preschools teachers had the same perception:

> I spent extra time interacting with parents to discuss on their children’s education. I feel it is my responsibility to help the children in the learning process (Teacher, *PERPADUAN* preschool)
I love my profession. That is why I always try to find out new approaches to be applied in class. I am happy if my students are enjoying my class (Teacher, MOE preschool)

Teachers perceived job engagement as contributor to preschool service quality. The teachers’ understanding of the preschool’s vision and aims; and passion with teaching profession brought a great outcome of students.

5.4.1.3 Quality of environment

i) School atmosphere

During the interviews, school atmosphere was perceived as one of the most important factors for creating high quality preschool service functions. The atmosphere in a preschool was evaluated based on school environment such as location, safety and suitability of the building, spaces for outdoor activities and the classroom interiors.

Views of Government Officers

School appearance, location, structure of building, safety, cleanliness and spaces utilized were frequently mentioned by the officers because the government agencies perceived them to be important.

The PERPADUAN officer noted that appearance of the preschools was essential in reflecting their true quality. He claimed attractiveness was essential in preschools as it mirrored the service offered by the agency. According to him, having a cheerful environment, comfortable teaching and learning spaces, safe and clean classes attracted children and parents to the schools that the government agency or department provided:

The appearance is essential as part of quality aspects in preschool. The positive impression of parents could attract them with the school. (Officer, PERPADUAN)

The officers from PERPADUAN and KEMAS remarked on the importance of the choice of building to run the preschool program. This concerned the issue of spaces. They stated most
of the preschools were located in public community halls and were rented from individual buildings such as low-cost apartments, single-storey or double-stories terrace houses (unit houses), or bungalows located close to community areas. However, due to dissimilar types of buildings, the availability of indoor and outdoor spaces varied. For example, some of the spaces in community halls had to be shared with the general public. Thus the spaces for preschool class activities were limited only to certain areas. Similarly the problem concerning spaces occurred in other rented premises as stated below:

School quality also is evaluated based on the indoor and outdoor activities held. But due to the choice limitation, some schools are located at low-cost apartments and intermediate terrace houses that have no outdoor spaces. (Officer, PERPADUAN)

We offer many classes all over the country. We understand sometimes the choice of building is not suitable. But, we have to utilize whatever resources we have whenever there is a need to open a class. (Officer, KEMAS)

In contrast, preschools provided by the Ministry of Education (MOE) were more structured and standardized in terms of building and environment, because they were located in primary schools. The preschools were already conditioned with an educational environment such as classroom with facilities and outdoor playing facilities. The MOE officer mentioned schools with complete outdoor and indoor spaces and standardized class arrangement could stimulate the educational environment for students. She believed that school ambiance could attract students and give parents more confidence in the educational service by the school:

The school ambiance shows the preschool’s educational quality as it reflects the overall service provided by the school such as academic and art activities, and interesting indoor and outdoor games (Officer, MOE)

According to Selangor State Islamic Religion Department (SIRD) officer, the locations of SIRD preschools depended on the availability of state government premises. In Selangor, there are twelve SIRD preschools, of which seven are located in Klang Valley. The schools are held in mosques, religious primary schools or Sekolah Rendah Agama (SRA) and public buildings. Due to limited budgets and locations, SIRD could not prepare its own buildings for
preschools. The officer admitted that was a challenge in trying to provide a standardized quality of service. She realized that some unsuitable buildings such as public halls and old SRA aroused concerns regarding safety and adequacy of spaces:

\[\text{SIRD aware the quality of a school is also influenced by the suitability and safety of the building and environment. Thus, from time to time we try to improve our preschools depends on our budget and ability. (Officer, SIRD)}\]

The government officers also mentioned the necessity for safety in preschools. As some of the preschools have to share the use of buildings with the wider community, they concerned with the safety of schools’ facilities and students’ safety:

\[\text{Safety aspects such as safe arrangement in class and secure environment for students are very important. People perceive the school’s quality as very bad if the safety aspect is not taken seriously. (Officer, MOE)}\]

\[\text{We try to get the best location for our preschools to ensure the students are safe and can learn in a good condition. Safety is the priority. (Officer, KEMAS)}\]

Views of Teachers

The teachers frequently mentioned the terms suitability, comfort and attractiveness of the preschool environment as factors that influence service quality. One teacher stated that the suitability of the preschool building was a concern of hers. She cited her preschool which is located at the intermediate of single-storey terrace house (unit house) does not have outdoor playing facilities due to outdoor space limitations. Figure 5.1 highlights the environment of one public preschool in not having even a single outdoor facility. As a teacher, she is very concerned with the importance of outdoor activities with adequate space and playing facilities for children. She expressed her concern at the lack of outdoor activities; as this affected the quality of education offered:

\[\text{The school building should be suitable for both indoor and outdoor activities. Students will be benefited a lot from these activities (Teacher, KEMAS preschool)}\]
Other preschool teachers also expressed the same concern for the preschools that were located at the ground floor of low-cost apartments. The teachers mentioned that space limitations impeded the gross motor activities of children such as crawling, jumping and running. They said that these preschools did not have outdoor facilities since they were bounded by pavements for the public. Figure 5.2 clearly shows the environment of public preschool that is located at the ground floor of low cost apartment. They also mentioned the safety of the students because there were no areas with gates for them while waiting for their parents when school had finished for the day:

*In providing quality preschool, spaces played important roles. Children must be given chance for indoor and outdoor activities to get balance input.* (Teacher, KEMAS preschool)

*The limited outdoor space affects the quality of preschool education as the students are only allowed to be inside of the class.* (Teacher, KEMAS preschool)

*In preschool, both indoor and outdoor activities are important. Thus the class and outdoor area should be completely suitable for them.* (Teacher, PERPADUAN preschool)
A number of preschools teachers stated that preschools were surrounded by fences and gates in an effort to make schools safer for children. Preschools without fences were exposed to risks and made it hard for the teachers to monitor activities from a distance. Figure 5.3 shows a preschool that satisfied the teachers because it complied with safety rules. Two teachers stated:

*School location should be in safe area. Parents won’t simply let their children to places that are exposed to danger such as near to busy-traffic main road or black areas.* (Teacher, PERPADUAN preschool)

*I think preschools that are located at primary schools are safer because they are facilitated with security guards.* (Teacher, SIRD preschool)
Concerning the internal environment, preschools situated in primary schools needed tight safety measures. Teachers from the MOE stated the preschool classes were usually separated from higher grades classes and surrounded by fences so that students could be easily observed by their teachers:

*By placing the preschool classes in separate building, the students are safer because the teachers can easily monitor them in small area.* (Teacher, MOE preschool)

The teachers stated the quality of preschools was also evaluated in terms of their safety practices such as the arrangement of the facilities, safe-use bathroom, and having a safe and clean kitchen. One PERPADUAN preschool teacher remarked that most of the parents who visited the school observed the classroom surrounding, kitchen and bathroom because they were concerned with safety and cleanliness:

*The evaluation on service quality of preschool is not only on the academic aspect, but also the safe and clean surrounding of class and other areas in school.* (Teacher, PERPADUAN preschool)

**Views of Parents**
Most parents mentioned school environment as important in contributing to service quality of preschool education. ‘Cheerful’, ‘clean’ and ‘safe environment’ were the terms that always emerged when they discussed the school ambiance. A few parents mentioned their preference for schools that were environmentally cheerful and clean inside and outside. They claimed teachers should be creative and show initiative in making the school attractive. They believed the external appearance could influence parents to choose the best school for their children.

Figure 5.4 addresses the cheerful side of a classroom that could attract parents and students:

I believe parents evaluate a preschool based on its attractiveness and cheerfulness. It also psychologically could encourage kids to love going to school. (Parent, KEMAS preschool)

In my opinion, the cheerful environment of school could mirror the character of the teachers that love children. It is really true with this preschool. (Parent, PERPADUAN preschool)

Preschool is the first educational place for children. It should be attractive and does not look too serious because that would be scary for them. (Parent, PERPADUAN preschool)
Safety also emerged as important issue for parents with reference to service quality. They stated it was essential for schools to have fences security guards to ensure the children and staffs were safe. Security guards could prevent outsiders from simply entering the school. However, not all preschools used security guards. From the researcher’s observation, only preschools that were located in primary schools (significantly MOE preschools) had security guards:

It is important for school to be surrounded with fences and has security guards to assure the safety of students. (Parent, MOE preschool)

I understand it is impossible for preschool to hire security guard as it only has one or two classes. But it is important for the school to be surrounded with fences to ensure the students’ safety. (Parent, KEMAS preschool)

For me, teachers play important roles to ensure the students are safe. Teachers should do safety cautions such as lock the gates during class time and do not simply allow strangers to enter the school. (Parent, PERPADUAN preschool)

There are still public preschools that do not have fences surrounding. I don’t think it is safe enough for students to play outside as they are exposed to external environment and strangers. (Parent, KEMAS preschool)

All of the stakeholders pointed the importance of school atmosphere in providing service quality. The conducive environment that considered the elements of safety, location suitability and ambience contributed to quality.

5.4.1.4 Quality of facilities and equipment

Facilities and equipment are the other important aspects of service quality in preschool education. They refer to what is utilized in the school to facilitate teaching and learning. Overall, the stakeholders evaluated the quality of preschools based on the adequacy and suitability of basic facilities and teaching facilities such as chairs, desks, white boards, reference books, flash cards, educational games, interactive boards and computers. The outdoor and indoor playing equipment were also mentioned frequently during the interviews.
i) *Suitability and adequacy*

**Views of Government Officers**

Due to the government’s concern for improved preschool service quality, most of the officers mentioned on government plans to enhance the basic facilities, teaching and learning equipment and playing facilities. However, as each government agency offered a large number of preschools, improvements could not be done in a short time. As a result, many public preschools still lacked adequate facilities and had to wait for their turn to be equipped with facilities as needed.

The *PERPADUAN* officer stated each of the agencies had a limited budget to provide facilities. In fact the agencies had to spend the money wisely by giving the priority to preschools that needed the facilities:

*We aware on the essentiality of basic facilities and teaching equipment are essential in providing quality education. However teachers should be patient waiting for their turns to get the support. (Officer, PERPADUAN)*

*In this case, we have to look at the priority of the school. Schools that intensely need the facilities will be given first. (Officer, KEMAS)*

The officer from SIRD (Selangor State Islamic Religion Department) also highlighted the quality of a preschool was highly relied on the facilities provided for students. She strongly agreed that SIRD preschools should be given the same priority like other Islamic primary and secondary schools were run by the state government of Selangor. For example, when the preschools situated in primary schools or unused secondary school buildings, the students had to make use with unsuitable chairs and desks that could seriously inhibit the learning of young children. The officer treated this problem seriously and asserted SIRD would improve the weakness over time:

*Suitable facilities are important to provide service quality. SIRD will always try to improve them for students. (Officer, SIRD)*
According to *KEMAS* officer, some preschools located in remote areas faced more serious problems such as water and electricity shortages. Usually people that lived in remote areas were very poor and not exposed to the view that education is important. The students also were provided with school uniforms, school bags, books and stationery. The officer mentioned that these basic needs had to be supplied firstly by the ministry before other equipment was given. There was no use in providing teaching and learning facilities, computers or other facilities if the basic needs had not been issued. The statement by the *KEMAS* officer included other crucial problems for preschools in remote areas that were more complicated:

*The concern on each of our preschools has to be put differently depending on the condition of the school. We need to support more on schools that are very poor and located in rural areas.* (Officer, *KEMAS*)

**Views of Teachers**

When analysing the data the researcher identified the term ‘completeness’, ‘suitability’ and ‘up-to-date’ of facilities were frequently mentioned by the teachers when the quality issue was brought up. They mentioned their classes had complete basic facilities such as desks, chairs and white boards. However, some preschools were not suitably supplied. For example, the SIRD teacher stated that desks and chairs provided were too big for children to use. One *KEMAS* preschool teacher said that old desks and chairs would be easily broken and dangerous for children and cause accidents. They mentioned students would not be able to concentrate if they were not comfortable with the facilities provided. This could affect the quality of teaching and learning process in the classroom. Figure 5.5 shows a preschool class that uses a primary school class for learning. It highlights the unsuitable sizes and arrangement of desks and chairs to be used by preschool children.

*Students could learn comfortably when the class is provided with desks and chairs that are suitable for their sizes.* (Teacher, *SIRD preschool*)
Some of chairs and desks in my class are old and nearly broken. That is my school quality concern as the facilities could cause danger to students. (Teacher, KEMAS preschool)

Figure 5.5: View of preschool classroom with unsuitable facilities

Teachers also pointed to the importance of outdoor and indoor playing facilities in preschools. According to them, indoor and outdoor activities could stimulate students’ development as both activities involved physical and mental conditioning. Indoor playing facilities such as puzzles, blocks, dressed-up games and toys were important to encourage the students’ thinking and imagination skills. Outdoor playing facilities such as see-saw, monkey bars, swing and slide could strengthen the students’ muscles and body. According to a number of teachers, some preschools faced problems in getting enough outdoor playing facilities. This usually happened due to lack of space, unsuitable location or vandalism. Figure 5.6 shows a preschool with limited outdoor playing resources.

Outdoor playing facilities are part of quality factor in preschool. However, due to space limitation, the government couldn’t provide us the complete one. (Teacher, KEMAS preschool)

At the age of preschoolers, playing outdoor is part of the learning process. It is a loss for schools that can’t provide the facilities. (Teacher, PERPADUAN preschool)
Sufficient playing facilities are important to provide balance with academic learning. From my observation, parents evaluate the same quality too. (Teacher, PERPADUAN preschool)

![Image](Figure 5.6: View of preschool with insufficient playing facilities)

**Views of Parents**

Parents contended that preschools with complete basic facilities such as suitable desks and chairs, playing facilities and teaching equipment are important. According to one parent, in order to produce better quality of education, the basic facilities should be completely provided first.

*Always evaluate a school based on the basic facilities provided to make sure my child can learn comfortably.* (Parent, KEMAS preschool)

A parent of one SIRD preschool’s student hoped that the preschool could be improved from time to time in terms of providing complete and suitable chairs, desks and teaching facilities. She mentioned that she would be more satisfied with the educational service if the basic needs of the school were met as the curriculum did emphasize religious education, which was good.
Parents also mentioned the importance of playing facilities as one of the factor contributing to preschools’ service quality. They believed going to preschool should be fun and not stressful. By letting students play with the playing facilities already provided, their intellectual and social needs could be equally met. Some parents expressed their regret due to deficiencies in the facilities:

*All preschools must have indoor and outdoor playing facilities. These can stimulate children’s minds and psychomotor.* (Parent, MOE preschool)

*Both indoor and outdoor playing facilities are important in children’s development. But I have no choice to select other school.* (Parent, KEMAS preschool)

*I hope that one day this school will be allocated in suitable area so that it can be provided with outdoor playing facilities.* (Parent, PERPADUAN preschool)

All stakeholders in this study emphasized the importance of suitability and adequacy of basic facilities in preschools, specifically the teaching and learning facilities and the outdoor playing facilities. The factor of basic facilities supported the quality services provided.

**ii) Technology-related facilities**

During the interviews, the stakeholders mentioned the term ‘technological facilities’ as contributing to preschool service quality. It was realized that majority of the stakeholders defined ‘technological facilities’ as the use of computers, the Internet and early childhood program software. It was not a surprise when the stakeholders did not mention on other sophisticated technological equipment for the preschool education as this type of education only caters for children from ages four to six. Thus, technological facilities were already enough if the schools had computers and the Internet for teaching and learning.

*Views of Government Officers*
The government officers stated that it was important for the students to be exposed to computers and the Internet. Although nowadays it is widely used in Malaysia, there are still many families lagging behind the basic technologies. For this reason, the government is introducing technology for the students by providing computers to the schools. Since the MOE preschools are located in primary schools, the computer laboratory can be shared with preschool students.

*Students nowadays must be exposed to the use of technology because a lot of latest learning methods now are using computers and internet. (Officer, MOE)*

According to a PERPADUAN officer, usually most of preschools were provided with one or two computers but only few of them had Internet connection. He stated that due to limited government financial allocation to preschools, the computers provided had to be shared among approximately twenty-five students in one class and had to take turns:

*We try our best to fulfil the schools’ request for computers and internet. That is our aim to introduce the children with technology from whatever life background and races.*

The KEMAS officer stated that not all KEMAS preschools had computers due to unsuitable and unsafe surrounding. For example, schools that were located in community halls that were exposed to many outsiders or buildings with no fences were not given the priority to get such facilities. She admitted that this was a major failing for them when technology could not be employed in schools. Unluckily, the students would be left behind in the long run.

Similarly the SIRD officer also mentioned that providing education via technology was also one of the aims of SIRD preschools. She mentioned computers were only provided to preschools for administration purposes. Indeed, the officer admitted that learning via technology was one of the factors that could contribute to a better quality of the educational process. However, the challenging problem faced by SIRD preschools was the limited budget located by the state government.
Views of Teachers

The teachers defined using computers and interactive programs through the Internet. Five out of eight teachers believed such facilities could enhance teaching and learning and make the whole process fun for children. As there are now many software programs on early childhood education, the process of learning would be more attractive and effective for students to learn:

*Computer is important in teaching and learning because we can use many interactive programs for children.* (Teacher, SIRD preschool)

*Living in 21st century, the knowledge on IT is essential and should be taught since at the young age. Schools with no computers are outdated and should be provided.* (Teacher, KEMAS preschool)

*We have two computers at our school. I found the students are more attracted to learn and can learn fast using the interactive computer software.* (Teacher, PERPADUAN preschool)

The teachers also echoed the same challenges as stated by the government officers. Long waiting times and limited numbers of computers were usually the common challenges mentioned by them.

Views of Parents

Eight out of twelve parents highlighted the importance of computers in teaching and learning process. Like the teachers, the term ‘technological facility’ referred to the use of computers:

*Interactive program using computer is a good exposure to create fun learning for the preschoolers.* (Parent, MOE preschool)

Parents also mentioned being introduced to technological facilities such as computers was essential for families that did not have computers at home. As there were families on low incomes, having computers at home was not the most important item they needed. However, they understood technologies were important for their children to understand and be competent in using. Therefore parents relied on the government’s initiative to provide the equipments and learning programs for their children. Listening to stories of some parents on
their life difficulties, the researcher believed public preschools have a big role to play in educating the students and helping them find future careers:

- *I hope that the school exposes my kid with technology as we don’t have even one computer at home. I know the knowledge is important.* (Parent, SIRD preschool)

- *I’m glad the kids are learning using the computer at school. Frankly speaking, I’m afraid to operate a computer because I’m not familiar with it.* (Parent, KEMAS preschool)

- *Learning by using technological facilities is a must in preschool. It shouldn’t be treated as strange thing anymore.* (Parent, MOE preschool)

Learning facilities using technology such as computers is essential nowadays. Interactive programs; and fun educational videos that can be accessed via internet are beneficial to become part of educational inputs for students. It was not viewed as ‘value-added’ elements anymore but had become a ‘must’ in measuring preschool quality services.

### 5.5 Summary

Based on the qualitative analysis discussed in this chapter, it is evident that the government agencies officers, teachers and parents shared similarities and dissimilarities in viewing service quality as applied to preschool education. Some of the government’s provision of preschool services satisfied the teachers and parents but there were also weaknesses in delivering the services.

It is evident that teachers’ and parents’ perceptions very much relied on the conditions in which stakeholders lived and worked. The parents perceived the service quality in their role as customers. Teachers perceived quality as the ones who held the responsibility to practically educate the children in the school. The results obtained will be discussed together with the results for the quantitative analysis (next chapter) and in the concluding chapter of this thesis.
CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS FROM SURVEYS: USING FACTOR ANALYSIS AND MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings for quantitative part of the study. It identifies various perceptions on the quality factors and their relationships with the leadership aspects in preschools. Factor analyses were firstly conducted in order to discover the most important quality factors in preschool education from the perspectives of parents and teachers. A similar analysis also identified the roles of leadership in preschool education that influence the provision of preschool service quality. This study also tested eleven hypotheses using multiple regression analysis to identify the relationships between the leadership roles and service quality in preschool education.

6.2 Parents: Profile of the sample

6.2.1 Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>56.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 or more</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>535</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.1: Age of the Parents

The majority of the parents were aged between 30 to 39, which amounted to 56.8 per cent of all respondents. This was followed by parents that falling into the 40 to 49 age category, which was 27.7 per cent of the total of 535 parents.
6.2.2 Gender, race, and level of education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEX</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.2: Sex of the Parents

The gender of the respondents was very similar for men and women. There were 249 fathers and 286 mothers who responded to the questionnaires.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RACE</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>88.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.3: Race/Ethnicity of the Parents

The ratio of respondents based on race or ethnicity was clearly significant. Out of 535 parents, 472 were Malays. There were only forty-one Indians, eleven Chinese and eleven other people from the minority races. The big difference concerning racial background reflects the fact that the majority of families in Malaysia who sent their children in public preschools were Malays.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL OF EDUCATION</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPM</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>69.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.4: Level of Education of the Parents

Most of the parents had the *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM)*, the certificate for fifth graders in secondary school. This group represented a high percentage of respondents (70%). Parents with skills certificate, diploma and degree were only about thirty per cent of the respondents.
6.2.3 Area of employment, household income, and number of children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA OF EMPLOYMENT</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not working</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment/Broadcasting</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance/Insurance</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Social services</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel and catering</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information technology</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defence</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retailing</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommunication</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>535</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.5: Area of Employment of the Parents

Based on the data, 130 parents were unemployed, the reason being that most of them were housewives. This was followed by 101 parents who worked in manufacturing industries, the majority of them worked as factory workers. There were also parents who worked as retailers and in the public government occupations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOUSEHOLD INCOME</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than RM 500</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM 500- RM 1500</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>46.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM 1500- RM 3000</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than RM 3000</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>535</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.6: Household Income of the Parents
Nearly 50 per cent of the parents earned RM 500.00 to RM 1500.00 per month. This figure means that the majority of the respondents were basically low income earners. About 34 per cent of parents were middle income earners. The data also showed that there were twenty-two respondents who were extremely poor and earned less than RM 500.00 per month.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBER OF CHILDREN</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 6</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.7: Number of Children of the Parents

The data indicated that the majority (60%) of respondents had one to three children and 35% of respondents had four to six children.

6.3 Teachers: Profile of the sample

6.3.1 Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.8: Age of the Teachers

Most of the teachers were in the 40-49 age bracket, followed by teachers aged between thirty to thirty-nine.
6.3.2 Gender, race, and level of education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEX</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>99.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.9: Sex of the Teachers

Out of 120 teachers, only one teacher was a male. During the data collection phase, it was very hard to find male preschool teachers. In Malaysia, females are more favoured being teachers based on the conservative perception roles of women in caring for and rearing small children (Erden et al., 2011). This is supported in The Development of Education in National Report of Malaysia in year 2004 that confirms it is an extreme challenge for the government to attract male candidates into the teaching profession.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RACE</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>95.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.10: Race/Ethnicity of the Teachers

Malays constituted the largest racial group for the teachers (>95%). Only four Indian teachers and one Chinese teacher participated in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL OF EDUCATION</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPM</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.11: Level of Education of the Respondents
Seventy-five per cent of the teachers were *SPM* holders. Ten per cent had a diploma while only 7.5 per cent of the teachers had a bachelor degree.

### 6.3.3 Work experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORKING EXPERIENCE</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1 year</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-4 years</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9 years</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14 years</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19 years</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 years and more</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.12: Working experience of the Teachers

Based on the data, 25% of teachers had worked from between ten to fourteen years in preschool education. The other twenty-five per cent had between one to four years of teaching experience. Nearly twenty per cent of the teachers had worked in early childhood education for between fifteen and nineteen years.

### 6.4 Results

#### 6.4.1 Extraction of service quality factors and leadership in preschool education

Quality factors are highly dispersed at all levels of education either in higher learning institutions, schools and the preschools. Considering the relevance of the quality factors, they were included in the instrument. Therefore, in this study a factor analysis was done in order to identify factors of quality in preschool education that were perceived as important by parents.
and teachers. On this basis the types of quality in preschool education could be categorized based on their contexts.

On this subject, factor analysis is a statistical technique applied to a single set of variables when the researcher is interested in discovering which variables in the set form coherent subsets that are relatively independent of one another (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). It is included in the SPSS package as a ‘data reduction’ technique. The large data are reduced to smaller sets of factors by looking at the ‘clumps’ or groups among the intercorrelations of a set of variables (Pallant, 2009).

In this study, the researcher did factor analysis on two sets of variables, these being service quality factors and roles of leadership on the provision of preschool service quality. As there were two different groups of respondents (parents and teachers), four sets of factor analyses were conducted.

Assumptions in factor analysis (Pallant, 2009)

1. Sample size. Having sufficient sample size in factor analysis is important when trying to provide precise solutions (MacCallum et al., 1999). The researchers suggest there should be at least 100 cases in order to obtain accurate results. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), the overall sample size should be 150+ ideally or a ratio of at least five cases for each of the variables. For the cases with less than 150, the number is acceptable if the solutions have several high loading marker variables (> .80). In this study there were 535 cases for parents and 120 cases for teachers. The factor analyses for both service quality and management sets of variables revealed several high loading (> .80). Thus the number of sample sizes for both parents and teachers were accepted.

2. Factorability of the correlation matrix. The purpose of examining the correlation is to identify whether the variables are related, and to ensure that the factor model is appropriate.
At least some correlations of $r = .3$ or greater for factor analysis can be considered suitable. There are two different scales making up this instrument, namely ‘service quality scale’ and ‘leadership scale’. The ‘service quality scale’ includes items 1-51, which aims to identify the perceptions of parents and teachers of factors constituting service quality in preschool education. The ‘leadership scale’ includes items 52-83 which measure the level of importance of leadership roles in providing service quality in preschool education.

The other two indices are Bartlett’s test of Sphericity and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO). Bartlett’s test is a method used to test the hypothesis that a correlation matrix is an ‘identity matrix’. If the value of $p < .05$, it indicates the use of a factor model is appropriate. The KMO measure is an index that compares the magnitudes of the observed correlation coefficients against the magnitudes of the partial. Its value is between 0 and 1. A small KMO measure value (KMO value < 0.6) indicates that the use of factor analysis of the variables may not be an appropriate method (Pallant, 2009).

Table 6.13 and Table 6.14 explain the significant correlations between variables. Overall, more than half of the coefficients are greater than 0.30. Bartlett’s test rejects the hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix, as all the values are significant. The KMO scale values are all higher than 0.60 (generally an acceptable value). In can be concluded that these indices suggest the use of factor analysis is an appropriate method for data examination.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCALE</th>
<th>SERVICE QUALITY</th>
<th>LEADERSHIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of coefficients greater than 0.30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartlett’s test of sphericity</td>
<td>8463.954</td>
<td>6456.229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KMO measure of sampling adequacy</td>
<td>0.951</td>
<td>0.937</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.13: Descriptive statistics of the Scale Correlation Matrix for parents respondents
### Table 6.14: Descriptive statistics of the Scale Correlation Matrix for teachers respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCALE</th>
<th>SERVICE QUALITY</th>
<th>LEADERSHIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of coefficients greater than 0.30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartlett’s test of sphericity</td>
<td>2109.728</td>
<td>2473.638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KMO measure of sampling adequacy</td>
<td>0.865</td>
<td>0.887</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.4.1.1 Service quality scale – Factor extraction

As mentioned earlier, the questionnaires were distributed to two different groups of respondents: parents and teachers. Thus the factor analysis was conducted independently between the two groups, in which two different results of factor extraction were expected.

In the analysis, direct oblimin rotation method and pairwise deletion of cases with missing values were used for the principal factor analysis measuring the 51 items of service quality factors in preschool education. Three criteria were used to identify factor: eigenvalue, scree plot and the component matrix. Principal components analysis revealed the presence of six components with eigenvalues exceeding 1 for ‘parents’ respondents and five components for ‘teachers’ respondents. For parents group, the variance explained 36.64%, 5.65%, 4.99%, 4.00%, 3.35% and 3.07% respectively. For the teachers’ group, the variance explained 35.97%, 9.22%, 7.92%, 6.91% and 5.33% respectively.

The scree plots of Service Quality Scale (SQS) are presented as follows:
Both scree plots for Figure 6.1 and Figure 6.2 recommend to retain six components for ‘parents’ group and five components for ‘teachers’ group. Direct oblimin rotation method was applied so that meaningful constructs could be obtained. Inspection of the factor matrices reveals some important attributes of the SQS.

Furthermore, data reductions were done several times for both factor extractions. A few factors were dropped in the assumption that the items were not strong enough to be service quality factors or the items had the same meaning as other items. Only a few factors with loading values of 0.50 and above are retained to make sure all the factors are strong. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), the greater the loading, the more the variable is a
pure measure of the factor. As a result, only 28 items with six factors are retained in the factor extraction for ‘parents’ respondents and 26 items with five factors for ‘teachers’ respondents.

For the ‘parents’ group, items relating to ‘value of the school’ have a high loading in Factor 1. Items in ‘program structure’ and ‘curriculum’ seem to correlate together in Factor 2. ‘Basic facilities’ are lumped into Factor 3 while ‘routine and interaction’ items are a part of Factor 4. ‘School relationship’ items are grouped in Factor 5 and ‘School staff’ is put into Factor 6. In the factor extraction for teachers as respondents, items in ‘routines and interaction’ have a high loading in Factor 1. Factor 2 consists of items in ‘curriculum’. The ‘basic facilities’ items have a high loading in Factor 3. Items in ‘value of the school’ and ‘program structure’ are correlated in Factor 4 and finally ‘school staff’ items become part of Factor 5.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value of the school (cultural values)</td>
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<td>.730</td>
<td>.730</td>
<td>.730</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.687</td>
<td>.687</td>
<td>.687</td>
<td>.687</td>
<td>.687</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value of the school (religious values)</td>
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<td>.665</td>
<td>.665</td>
<td>.665</td>
<td>.665</td>
<td>.665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of the school (reputation)</td>
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<td>.625</td>
<td>.625</td>
<td>.625</td>
<td>.625</td>
<td>.625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>.616</td>
<td>.616</td>
<td>.616</td>
<td>.616</td>
<td>.616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of the school (surrounding)</td>
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<td>.558</td>
<td>.558</td>
<td>.558</td>
<td>.558</td>
<td>.558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of the school (enrolment)</td>
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<td>.524</td>
<td>.524</td>
<td>.524</td>
<td>.524</td>
<td>.524</td>
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<td>.305</td>
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<td>.828</td>
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<td>Program structure (group size)</td>
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<td>Program structure (group time)</td>
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<td>.534</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curriculum (sc materials)</td>
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<td>.391</td>
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<td>.391</td>
<td>.391</td>
<td>.391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum (group activities)</td>
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<td>.324</td>
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<td>Basic fac (space)</td>
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<td>Basic fac (cheerful)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basic fac (indoor)</td>
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<td>Routines and interaction (safety practice)</td>
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<td>.721</td>
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<tr>
<td>Routines and interaction (communication)</td>
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<td>.615</td>
<td>.615</td>
<td>.615</td>
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<tr>
<td>Routines and interaction (discipline)</td>
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<td>.596</td>
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<tr>
<td>Routines and interaction (toilet)</td>
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<td>.541</td>
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<td>-.711</td>
<td>-.711</td>
<td>-.711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-.695</td>
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<td>-.695</td>
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<td>.728</td>
<td>.728</td>
<td>.728</td>
<td>.728</td>
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<td>.727</td>
<td>.727</td>
<td>.727</td>
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<td>.727</td>
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<td>School staff (skills)</td>
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<td>.658</td>
<td>.658</td>
<td>.658</td>
<td>.658</td>
<td>.658</td>
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<tr>
<td>School staff (appearance)</td>
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<td>.590</td>
<td>.590</td>
<td>.590</td>
<td>.590</td>
<td>.590</td>
</tr>
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<td>School staff (acad qual)</td>
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<td>.544</td>
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</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 10 iterations.

Table 6.15: Pattern Matrix for Service Quality Scale for parents group
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Routines and interaction (health practice)</td>
<td>.919</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routines and interaction (safety practice)</td>
<td>.897</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routines and interaction (toilet)</td>
<td>.853</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>Routines and interaction (communication)</td>
<td>.790</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routines and interaction (interact among students)</td>
<td>.721</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routines and interaction (discipline)</td>
<td>.713</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routines and interaction (meals)</td>
<td>.699</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum (sc materials)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.837</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Curriculum (blocks)</td>
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<td>.586</td>
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<td>Curriculum (music)</td>
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<td>Curriculum (tv)</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Basic fac (kitchen)</td>
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<td>-.789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic fac (refreshment space)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-.785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic fac (hygiene)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic fac (indoor)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>-.708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic fac (first aid)</td>
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<td>-.704</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basic fac (gates)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of the school (school reputation)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of the school (religious values)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of the school (surrounding)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program structure (extra activities)</td>
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<td>School relationship (parents involvement)</td>
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<td>-.730</td>
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<td>School staff (trained)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-.714</td>
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<tr>
<td>School staff (skills)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>-.694</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 10 iterations.

Table 6.16: Pattern Matrix for Service Quality Scale for teachers group

Each of the factors extracted by analysing the responding parents and teachers should be renamed in order to make their perceptions of service quality more understandable and indicate the relevant group of quality aspects being perceived (Fang et al., 2004).
Consequently, the six factors in Service Quality Scale (SQS) for ‘parents’ respondents are renamed. Factor 1, which includes ‘value of the school’, is labelled ‘**Quality of School Values**’ since the items in it mention the quality created by school recognition, reputation and the values promoted by the preschools.

Factor 2, which includes items in ‘program structure’, is best labelled ‘**Quality of Educational Experience**’. This factor lists the quality aspects that are related to students’ educational experiences such as free play activities and group activities.

‘Basic facilities’ in Factor 3 is suitably renamed ‘**Quality of School Atmosphere**’. The quality items include the environment inside classes and surrounding aspects of school such as the classroom space, landscape and facilities.

Factor 4 which is related to ‘daily routines and students interaction’ is labelled ‘**Quality of Health and Wellbeing**’ in where the health and safety practices as well as daily interactions of students are listed as parts of quality factors.

‘School relationship with parents and community’ which is part of Factor 5 is renamed ‘**Quality of Interaction**’. This factor involves school interactions with stakeholders outside of the school such as information dissemination and discussion between teacher and parents.

Finally, Factor 6 comprises items on ‘school staff’ that can be labelled ‘**Quality of Teachers**’. This factor includes the aspects of teachers that can be evaluated as part of preschool service quality such as experience and academic qualification.

Table 6.17 shows the new groups’ names and their factor loading values. The factor extractions from these analyses reveal the majority of the service quality factors grouped together. Thus it can be stated that the questions yield high construct validity.
Factors in the Service Quality Scale (SQS) for ‘teachers’ respondents are also renamed. Factor 1 which includes ‘daily routines and students’ interaction’ is now labelled ‘Quality of Health and Wellbeing’.

Factor 2 which is derived from ‘curriculum’ is suitably renamed ‘Quality of Teaching and Learning Facilities’. This factor includes items on instruments used in preschools that have a high impact on service quality.
‘Basic facilities’ are grouped in Factor 3 and labelled ‘Quality of School Atmosphere’. The ‘value of the school’ items are labelled as ‘Quality of School Values’ in Factor 4. From the point of view of teachers, this factor is related to what the school can offer to parents.

Finally, Factor 5 which consists of quality aspects from ‘school staff’ is now known as ‘Quality of Teachers’. Table 6.18 shows the renamed groups of factors and their factor loading values.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>FACTOR 1: QUALITY OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING</th>
<th>FACTOR LOADING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q. 25</td>
<td>Prepared meals</td>
<td>0.699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 26</td>
<td>Use of toilet and sink</td>
<td>0.853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 27</td>
<td>Health practices</td>
<td>0.919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 28</td>
<td>Safety practices</td>
<td>0.897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 29</td>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>0.713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 30</td>
<td>Communication between students and teachers</td>
<td>0.790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 31</td>
<td>Interaction among students</td>
<td>0.721</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>FACTOR 2: QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING FACILITIES</th>
<th>FACTOR LOADING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q. 17</td>
<td>Use of TV, video and/or computer</td>
<td>0.586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 18</td>
<td>Use of blocks/building materials</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 19</td>
<td>Science materials</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q. 23</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
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<th>ITEM</th>
<th>FACTOR 3: QUALITY OF SCHOOL ATMOSPHERE</th>
<th>FACTOR LOADING</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Q. 5</td>
<td>Facilities for playing and learning</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 6</td>
<td>Clean and safe kitchen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q. 7</td>
<td>Clean and attractive space for refreshment</td>
<td>0.785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 8</td>
<td>Facilities for personal hygiene</td>
<td>0.729</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>FACTOR 4: QUALITY OF SCHOOL VALUES</th>
<th>FACTOR LOADING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q. 37</td>
<td>Extra activities after school time</td>
<td>0.597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 43</td>
<td>School reputation</td>
<td>0.815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 46</td>
<td>Religious/moral values brought into the school</td>
<td>0.792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 49</td>
<td>Surrounding of the school</td>
<td>0.768</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>FACTOR 5: QUALITY OF TEACHERS</th>
<th>FACTOR LOADING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q. 11</td>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>0.771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 13</td>
<td>Personal appearance</td>
<td>0.730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 14</td>
<td>Trained</td>
<td>0.714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 15</td>
<td>Skills and knowledge of teachers</td>
<td>0.694</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.18: Five Factors of Service Quality Aspects from Teachers’ Views
6.4.1.2 Leadership Scale – Factor Extraction

Using the method of Principal Component Analysis (PCA), 32 items in the Leadership Scale (LS) for both ‘parents’ respondents and ‘teachers’ respondents were factor extracted. The component correlation matrix revealed five significant components for both analyses. For ‘parents’ respondents, PCA detected five components with eigenvalues exceeding 1, with respective variances of 38.49%, 7.28%, 4.73%, 4.32% and 4.15% (refer to Figure 6.3). The components for ‘teachers’ respondents also revealed variances of 42.58%, 7.32%, 6.96%, 5.55% and 4.35% respectively (see Figure 6.4).

Figure 6.3: Scree plot of the Leadership Scale for parents group
Similarly to the Service Quality Scale (SQS), data reductions in the Leadership Scale (LS) are done several times for both factor extractions by eliminating redundant factors that have low loadings. Factors with loading values of 0.50 and above are retained. As a result, 24 items with five factors are retained in factor extraction for both ‘parents’ respondents ‘teachers’ respondents.

Figure 6.4: Scree plot of the Leadership Scale for teachers group
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lship in symbolic aspects (charismatic leader)</td>
<td>.710</td>
<td>.682</td>
<td>.614</td>
<td>.581</td>
<td>.580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in symbolic aspects (teamwork)</td>
<td>.682</td>
<td>.758</td>
<td>.696</td>
<td>.691</td>
<td>.686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in symbolic aspects (human relationship)</td>
<td>.614</td>
<td>.758</td>
<td>.696</td>
<td>.691</td>
<td>.686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in symbolic aspects (school head)</td>
<td>.581</td>
<td>.630</td>
<td>.691</td>
<td>.691</td>
<td>.686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in symbolic aspects (motivation)</td>
<td>.580</td>
<td>.630</td>
<td>.630</td>
<td>.630</td>
<td>.630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in technical aspects (plan curriculum)</td>
<td>.780</td>
<td>.780</td>
<td>.780</td>
<td>.780</td>
<td>.780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in technical aspects (develop goals)</td>
<td>.758</td>
<td>.758</td>
<td>.758</td>
<td>.758</td>
<td>.758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in technical aspects (check record)</td>
<td>.696</td>
<td>.696</td>
<td>.696</td>
<td>.696</td>
<td>.696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in technical aspects (yearly planning)</td>
<td>.691</td>
<td>.691</td>
<td>.691</td>
<td>.691</td>
<td>.691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in technical aspects (observe instruction)</td>
<td>.686</td>
<td>.686</td>
<td>.686</td>
<td>.686</td>
<td>.686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in technical aspects (observe students)</td>
<td>.630</td>
<td>.630</td>
<td>.630</td>
<td>.630</td>
<td>.630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in human aspects (teacher's experience)</td>
<td>.474</td>
<td>.474</td>
<td>.474</td>
<td>.474</td>
<td>.474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in human aspects (salary)</td>
<td>.685</td>
<td>.685</td>
<td>.685</td>
<td>.685</td>
<td>.685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in human aspects (teacher's appearance)</td>
<td>.543</td>
<td>.543</td>
<td>.543</td>
<td>.543</td>
<td>.543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in human aspects (local community)</td>
<td>.538</td>
<td>.538</td>
<td>.538</td>
<td>.538</td>
<td>.538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in human aspects (good relationship)</td>
<td>.415</td>
<td>.415</td>
<td>.415</td>
<td>.415</td>
<td>.415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in educational aspects (science and math)</td>
<td>.814</td>
<td>.814</td>
<td>.814</td>
<td>.814</td>
<td>.814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in educational aspects (learning resources)</td>
<td>.742</td>
<td>.742</td>
<td>.742</td>
<td>.742</td>
<td>.742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mgt of educational aspects (blocks &amp; building materials)</td>
<td>.714</td>
<td>.714</td>
<td>.714</td>
<td>.714</td>
<td>.714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in educational aspects (social activities)</td>
<td>.603</td>
<td>.603</td>
<td>.603</td>
<td>.603</td>
<td>.603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in cultural aspects (performance)</td>
<td>.759</td>
<td>.759</td>
<td>.759</td>
<td>.759</td>
<td>.759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in cultural aspects (understanding)</td>
<td>.717</td>
<td>.717</td>
<td>.717</td>
<td>.717</td>
<td>.717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in cultural aspects (authority)</td>
<td>.688</td>
<td>.688</td>
<td>.688</td>
<td>.688</td>
<td>.688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in cultural aspects (culture)</td>
<td>.592</td>
<td>.592</td>
<td>.592</td>
<td>.592</td>
<td>.592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lship in cultural aspects (environment)</td>
<td>.569</td>
<td>.569</td>
<td>.569</td>
<td>.569</td>
<td>.569</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Extraction Method:** Principal Component Analysis.  
**Rotation Method:** Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.  

Table 6.19: Pattern Matrix for Leadership Scale for parents group
For the parents’ group, items on ‘leadership in symbolic aspects’ have a high loading in Factor 1. Six items in ‘leadership in technical aspects’ and one item in ‘leadership in human aspects’ did correlate in Factor 2. ‘Leadership in human aspects’ are grouped in Factor 3 while ‘leadership in educational aspects’ items are placed in Factor 4. Finally, ‘leadership in cultural aspects’ items are placed in Factor 5.

Meanwhile, in the factor extraction for teachers’ group, items in ‘leadership in educational aspects’ have a high loading in Factor 1. Factor 2 consisted of items in ‘leadership in technical aspects’. Items in ‘leadership in cultural aspects’ are loaded in Factor 3, while items in ‘leadership in symbolic aspects’ are grouped in Factor 4. Lastly, Factor 5 is loaded with items in ‘leadership in human aspects’. Table 6.19 and Table 6.20 show the pattern matrix of factor extraction for the Leadership Scale (LS) with reference to the parents group and teachers group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Component 1</th>
<th>Component 2</th>
<th>Component 3</th>
<th>Component 4</th>
<th>Component 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership in educational aspects (blocks &amp; building materials)</td>
<td>.873</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership in educational aspects (learning resources)</td>
<td>.823</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership in educational aspects (science and math)</td>
<td>.743</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership in educational aspects (fine motor activities)</td>
<td>.501</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.338</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership in educational aspects (social activities)</td>
<td>.496</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership in educational aspects (gross motor activities)</td>
<td>.496</td>
<td>.882</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership in technical aspects (observe instruction)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.882</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership in technical aspects (check record)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.828</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership in technical aspects (observe students)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.761</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership in technical aspects (plan curriculum)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.697</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership in technical aspects (develop goals)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.692</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership in technical aspects (yearly planning)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.630</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership in cultural aspects (performance)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.882</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After extracting the factors, it is important to rename or label the groups of factors for the purpose of making sense of the data derived from the analysis. Furthermore, by renaming the factors, the roles of these independent variables will be more understandable. For both parents and teachers groups, as the factors identified are similar, the renamed labels for each of five factors are the same.

Factors in Leadership Scale (LS) are those indicating the roles of leadership in providing service quality. The variable ‘leadership in symbolic aspect’ is now known as ‘Possession of Leadership Quality’. The items in this variable focus on the importance of leadership quality and characters in the school to improve the service quality in preschool such as being a charismatic leader and inspiring teachers.
The second factor is ‘Planning of Preschool Operations’ which derived from ‘leadership in technical aspects’ items. This factor assesses how a proper education plan can improve the quality of service provided over the course of a year. For instance, the school planning and school educational goal settings can lead to improved preschool quality service.

‘Leadership in human aspects’ is rebadged as ‘Connection with Stakeholders’. This indicates the importance of school management to develop and maintain relationships with teachers, parents and local community by arranging and acknowledging them in school programs or school decision-making.

The fourth factor is ‘Management of Learning and Teaching’ which is derived from ‘leadership in educational aspects’. This factor focuses on the importance of school management in preparing appropriate and suitable teaching and learning content to fulfil stakeholders’ expectations of curriculum quality.

Finally, ‘leadership in cultural aspects’ can be labelled ‘Cultivation of School Culture’ and this factor sees the effects of cultural values generated by the school management as contributing to service quality. Table 6.21 and Table 6.22 show the new groups’ names and their factor loading values for the ‘parents’ group and ‘teachers’ group. As most of the leadership roles are grouped together, it can be stated that the questions yield high construct validity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>FACTOR 1: POSSESSION OF LEADERSHIP QUALITY</th>
<th>FACTOR LOADING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q. 73</td>
<td>Delivering inspirational motivation to teachers</td>
<td>0.580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 74</td>
<td>Acting as charismatic leader</td>
<td>0.709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 76</td>
<td>Naturally owned leader’s character</td>
<td>0.581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 77</td>
<td>Working together with teachers</td>
<td>0.682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 78</td>
<td>Emphasizing human relationship</td>
<td>0.612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>FACTOR 2: PLANNING OF PRESCHOOL OPERATION</td>
<td>FACTOR LOADING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 52</td>
<td>Incorporating students’ record in setting educational goals</td>
<td>0.758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 53</td>
<td>Incorporating students’ record in curriculum planning</td>
<td>0.780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 55</td>
<td>Preparing proper yearly planning</td>
<td>0.691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 56</td>
<td>Evaluating teachers’ teaching record</td>
<td>0.695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 57</td>
<td>Observing class instruction</td>
<td>0.685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>FACTOR 3: CONNECTION WITH STAKEHOLDERS</td>
<td>FACTOR LOADING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 60</td>
<td>Emphasizing teachers’ appearance</td>
<td>0.539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 62</td>
<td>Teacher’s salary</td>
<td>0.685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 63</td>
<td>Encouraging parents involvement</td>
<td>0.758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 65</td>
<td>Engaging with local community</td>
<td>0.540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>FACTOR 4: MANAGEMENT OF LEARNING AND TEACHING</td>
<td>FACTOR LOADING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 66</td>
<td>Providing adequate learning resources</td>
<td>0.742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 67</td>
<td>Providing blocks and building materials</td>
<td>0.714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 68</td>
<td>Providing challenging science and mathematics activities</td>
<td>0.813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 69</td>
<td>Encouraging group activities</td>
<td>0.601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>FACTOR 5: CULTIVATION OF SCHOOL CULTURE</td>
<td>FACTOR LOADING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 79</td>
<td>Bringing culture in school</td>
<td>0.593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 80</td>
<td>Influencing school working culture</td>
<td>0.758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 81</td>
<td>Practicing job empowerment</td>
<td>0.687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 82</td>
<td>Understanding multi-religious and multiracial issues</td>
<td>0.718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 83</td>
<td>Influencing the culture of school environment</td>
<td>0.567</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.21: Five Leadership Roles from Parents’ Views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>FACTOR 1: MANAGEMENT OF LEARNING AND TEACHING</th>
<th>FACTOR LOADING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q. 66</td>
<td>Providing adequate learning resources</td>
<td>0.823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 67</td>
<td>Providing blocks and building materials</td>
<td>0.873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 68</td>
<td>Providing challenging science and mathematics activities</td>
<td>0.743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 69</td>
<td>Encouraging group activities</td>
<td>0.496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>FACTOR 2: PLANNING OF PRESCHOOL OPERATION</td>
<td>FACTOR LOADING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 52</td>
<td>Incorporating students’ record in setting educational goals</td>
<td>0.692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 53</td>
<td>Incorporating students’ record in curriculum planning</td>
<td>0.697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 55</td>
<td>Preparing proper yearly planning</td>
<td>0.630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 56</td>
<td>Evaluating teachers’ teaching record</td>
<td>0.828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 57</td>
<td>Observing class instruction</td>
<td>0.882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 58</td>
<td>Observing students acceptance in class</td>
<td>0.761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITEM</td>
<td>FACTOR 3: CULTIVATION OF SCHOOL CULTURE</td>
<td>FACTOR LOADING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 79</td>
<td>Bringing culture in school</td>
<td>0.674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 80</td>
<td>Influencing school working culture</td>
<td>0.882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 81</td>
<td>Practicing job empowerment</td>
<td>0.860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 82</td>
<td>Understanding multi-religious and multiracial issues</td>
<td>0.670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q. 83</td>
<td>Influencing the culture of school environment</td>
<td>0.497</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 6

As the factor extraction was completed, further analyses by using t-test and multiple regression analysis were conducted in order to statistically describe the data and identify the relationships between service quality factors and leadership roles in Malaysian preschool education, with particular reference to service quality.

### 6.4.2 The relationship between service quality factors and leadership roles in preschool education

This section investigates the relationships between service quality factors and leadership roles in preschool education from the perceptions of the parents group and the teachers group. The standard multiple regression is applied to identify the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. In this study, service quality factors are the dependent variables and the management aspects in preschool represent independent variables.

For the parents group, six main hypotheses concerning the relationship between service quality factors (quality of school values, quality of educational experience, quality of school atmosphere, quality of health and wellbeing, quality of interaction and quality of teachers) and leadership roles in preschool education (possession of leadership quality, planning of preschool operation, connection with stakeholders, management of learning
The hypotheses testing are also conducted in teachers group. There are five main hypotheses to be tested regarding the relationship between preschool quality factors (quality of school values, quality of school atmosphere, quality of health and wellbeing, quality of teachers and quality of teaching and learning facilities) and leadership roles (possession of leadership quality, planning of preschool operation, connection with stakeholders, management of learning and teaching; and cultivation of school culture). Figure 6.6 depicts the model for the relationships between the two factors.
6.4.2.1 Interpretation of output from standard multiple regression

6.4.2.1.1 Checking the assumptions

There are some assumptions outlined in interpreting the output from standard multiple regression. One of them is by checking multicollinearity for the independent variables. Multicollinearity is an undesirable property that causes estimation difficulties (Diamantopoulos and Winklhofer 2001). According to Bollen and Lennox (1991), cited in Diamantopoulos, Riefler et al. (2008), high intercorrelated indicators are almost perfect linear combinations and thus likely contain redundant information. A preferable correlation value among the independent variables is not more than 0.7 (Pallant, 2009). In this study, the correlations among the independent variables for the ‘parents’ group are between 0.469 to
0.647 and 0.436 to 0.596 for cases of ‘teachers’ group. This indicates all variables in the analysis can be retained.

On the other hand, the correlation between independent variables and dependent variable must show at least some relationship (preferably above 0.3, according to Pallant 2009). The correlations for cases from parents group reveal all values are greater than 0.3 while those from the teachers group show that the majority of variables correlate to greater than 0.3.

A part from correlations, checking for multicollinearity can be identified from ‘collinearity diagnostics’ which can find the problems that may not appear in the correlation matrix. The output from the analysis labelled ‘Coefficient’ displayed two values namely ‘Tolerance and ‘VIF’ or variance inflation factor, which indicate multicollinearity. The small value of ‘Tolerance’ (less than .10) and big value of ‘VIF’ (above 10) indicate high value of multiple correlations with other variables and this leads to the possibility of multicollinearity (Pallant, 2009). In this study, all values relating to ‘Tolerance’ are above .10 and values of ‘VIF’ are less than 10.

In multiple regression analysis, the outliers are checked. Outliers are extreme data points that have the potential to influence statistical analyses and may distort the conclusions drawn from the data (Evans, 1999). Cases that have standardized residual of more than 3.3 or less than -3.3 are defined as outliers (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). In this analysis, the Casewise Diagnostics from the output table explain cases that have residual values above 3.0 or below -3.0. According to Pallant (2009), it is accepted that only 1 per cent of the total number of cases will fall outside this range. Based on the results, the highest number of outlier cases is five out of 535 cases from the ‘parents’ group. The 120 cases from the ‘teachers’ group reveal at most only one case is an outlier. Therefore, no cases should be removed from the analyses as the cases with outliers are less than 1 per cent.
To evaluate the model, the R square ($R^2$) is addressed so that the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the model (which includes all independent variables). In this study, the value of ‘adjusted $R^2$’ is used because it provides better estimate of the true population value (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). Finally, in order to identify which independent variable which best explains the dependent variable, the largest value of beta coefficient ($\beta$) is identified. The p-value or Sig. value for each of variable indicates whether it makes a significant contribution to the equation. Sig. value with less than .05 shows the variable is making a significant and unique contribution to the prediction of the dependent variable (Pallant, 2009).

6.4.2.2 Results for hypotheses testing - The parents group

6.4.2.2.1 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF SCHOOL VALUES and leadership roles in preschool education

To check the link between the provision of quality of school values and leadership roles in preschool education, the following hypotheses were set:

Hypothesis 1.1: Provision of quality of school values is positively related to possession of leadership quality

Hypothesis 1.2: Provision of quality of school values is positively related to planning of preschool operation

Hypothesis 1.3: Provision of quality of school values is positively related to connection with stakeholders

Hypothesis 1.4: Provision of quality of school values is positively related to management of learning and teaching
Hypothesis 1.5: Provision of quality of school values is positively related to cultivation of school culture

The results about the link between provision of quality of school values and leadership roles in preschool are presented in Table 6.2. It is shown the value of adjusted $R^2$ is .49 which means the leadership roles explain 49 per cent of the variance in quality of school values ($F=102.72, p < .05$). Furthermore the outcomes reveal that the quality of school values consisting of quality based on a school’s reputation and recognition is best associated with the planning of preschool operation ($\beta = .36, p < .05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 1.2 is accepted as the results indicate a positive association between the provision of quality of school values and the planning of preschool operation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership roles in preschool education</th>
<th>Unstandardized coeff. B</th>
<th>Standardized coeff. $\beta$</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possession of leadership quality</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning of preschool operation</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.36*</td>
<td>8.83</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection with stakeholders</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>.195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of learning and teaching</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivation of school culture</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.23: Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of school values (parents respondents)

Secondly, the possession of leadership quality also shows an association with the provision of quality of school values ($\beta = .16, p < .05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 1.1 can be accepted because there is a positive association between both of them.
Thirdly, the leaders that cultivate school culture also makes a significant unique contribution to predict quality of school values but with lower Beta value (β = .15, p < .05). Therefore, Hypothesis 1.5 is accepted given the relationship between provision of corporative quality and management of school culture is positive.

In this test, it is also found that the management of learning and teaching also shows an association with the provision of quality of school values (β = .12, p < .05). Therefore, Hypothesis 1.4 can be accepted as there is a positive association between the provision of quality of school values and management of learning and teaching.

6.4.2.2.2 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE and leadership roles in preschool education

This section investigates the association between the provision of quality of educational experience and leadership roles in preschool education. The following hypotheses were set to identify the association between them:

Hypothesis 2.1: Provision of quality of educational experience is positively related to possession of leadership quality

Hypothesis 2.2: Provision of quality of educational experience is positively related to planning of preschool operation

Hypothesis 2.3: Provision of quality of educational experience is positively related to connection with stakeholders

Hypothesis 2.4: Provision of quality of educational experience is positively related to management of learning and teaching

Hypothesis 2.5: Provision of quality of educational experience is positively related to cultivation of school culture
The overall results of the analyses regarding their association are presented in Table 6.24. The results reveal the total leadership roles explain 22.3 per cent of the variance in provision of quality of educational experience ($R^2 = 0.22$, $F = 30.31$ $p < .05$).

The cultivation of school culture indicates the largest beta coefficient ($\beta = .22$, $p < .05$) in which it makes the strongest contribution to explain the provision of quality of educational experience. Therefore, Hypothesis 2.5 is accepted due to a positive relationship between the provision of quality of educational experience and the cultivation of school culture by leaders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership roles in preschool education</th>
<th>Unstandardized coeff. B</th>
<th>Standardized coeff. $\beta$</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possession of leadership quality</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning of preschool operation</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection with stakeholders</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of learning and teaching</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>.053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivation of school culture</td>
<td><strong>.14</strong></td>
<td><strong>.22</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.04</strong></td>
<td><strong>.000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < .05$

Table 6.24: Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of educational experience (parents respondents)

Secondly, the result also revealed a significant relationship between provision of quality of educational experience and connection with stakeholders ($\beta = .18$, $p < .05$). As there is a positive relationship between them, Hypothesis 2.3 is accepted.
6.4.2.2.3 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF SCHOOL ATMOSPHERE and leadership roles in preschool education

This section investigates the relationship between the provision of quality of school atmosphere and leadership roles in preschool education. To illustrate the link, the following hypotheses are proposed:

**Hypothesis 3.1:** Provision of quality of school atmosphere is positively related to possession of leadership quality

**Hypothesis 3.2:** Provision of quality of school atmosphere is positively related to planning of preschool operation

**Hypothesis 3.3:** Provision of quality of school atmosphere is positively related to connection with stakeholders

**Hypothesis 3.4:** Provision of quality of school atmosphere is positively related to management of learning and teaching

**Hypothesis 3.5:** Provision of quality of school atmosphere is positively related to cultivation of school culture

The results of the analyses are presented in Table 6.25. The R Square shown reveals that leadership roles explain 20% of the provision of quality of school atmosphere ($R^2 = .20, F = 27.13 p < .05$).

Quality of school atmosphere ($\beta = .16, p < .05$) is mostly contributed by preschool leader who possesses quality and unique characters. Hypothesis 3.1 is supported because the results indicate a positive link between the provision of quality of school atmosphere and the management of school leadership.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership roles in preschool education</th>
<th>Unstandardized coeff. B</th>
<th>Standardized coeff. β</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possession of leadership quality</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning of preschool operation</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>.056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection with stakeholders</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.520</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management of learning and teaching</td>
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<td>2.80</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivation of school culture</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>.040</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.25: Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of school atmosphere (parents respondents)

Secondly, the results also show there is a significant association between the quality of school atmosphere and the management of learning and teaching (β = .15, p < .05). It can therefore be concluded that Hypothesis 3.4 is accepted since there is a positive relationship between them.

Thirdly, it is evident from the results that a significant relationship between the provision of quality of school atmosphere and cultivation of school culture exists (β = .11, p < .05). This indicates Hypothesis 3.5 is supported due to the positive association between them.

### 6.4.2.2.4 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING and leadership roles in preschool education

This section investigates the link between the provision of quality of health and wellbeing and the leadership roles concerning preschool education. The hypotheses were proposed:

**Hypothesis 4.1:** Provision of quality of health and wellbeing is positively related to possession of leadership quality
Hypothesis 4.2: Provision of quality of health and wellbeing is positively related to planning of preschool operation

Hypothesis 4.3: Provision of quality of health and wellbeing is positively related to connection with stakeholders

Hypothesis 4.4: Provision of quality of health and wellbeing is positively related to management of learning and teaching

Hypothesis 4.5: Provision of quality of health and wellbeing is positively related to cultivation of school culture

The outcomes of the analyses regarding the associations are presented in Table 6.26. The value ($R^2 = .38, F = 65.59, p < .05$) indicates that the total leadership roles significantly explain 38 per cent of variance in the provision of quality of health and wellbeing.

Based on the results, preschool leader’s roles in planning for preschool operation have the strongest relationship with the provision of quality of health and wellbeing ($\beta = .34, p < .05$). Thus, Hypothesis 4.2 is accepted because there is a positive relationship between them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership roles in preschool education</th>
<th>Unstandardized coeff. B</th>
<th>Standardized coeff. $\beta$</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possession of leadership quality</td>
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<td>.18*</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning of preschool operation</td>
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<td>.34*</td>
<td>7.39</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
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<td>Connection with stakeholders</td>
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<td>-.06</td>
<td>-1.35</td>
<td>.179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of learning and teaching</td>
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<td>.26*</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivation of school culture</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.44</td>
<td>.657</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05

Table 6.26: Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of health and wellbeing (parents respondents)
Secondly, the provision of quality of health and wellbeing is also significantly associated with the management of learning and teaching ($\beta = .26, p < .05$). However, it is not as strong as the roles in planning the preschool operation. Nonetheless, the Hypothesis 4.4 is still accepted as they have a positive relationship.

Thirdly, the result reveals an association between the provision of quality of health and wellbeing and the possession of leadership quality ($\beta = .18, p < .05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 4.1 is supported as they are positively related.

6.4.2.2.5 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF INTERACTION and leadership roles in preschool education

This section determines the link between the provision of interactive quality and the leadership roles in preschool education. The following hypotheses were established to identify their relationship.

**Hypothesis 5.1: Provision of quality of interaction is positively related to possession of leadership quality**

**Hypothesis 5.2: Provision of quality of interaction is positively related to planning of preschool operation**

**Hypothesis 5.3: Provision of quality of interaction is positively related to connection with stakeholders**

**Hypothesis 5.4: Provision of quality of interaction is positively related to management of learning and teaching**

**Hypothesis 5.5: Provision of quality of interaction is positively related to cultivation of school culture**
The results of the analyses are presented in Table 6.27. The leadership roles explain 39 percent of the variance of the provision in quality of interaction in preschool education ($R^2 = .39$, $F = 67.82$, $p < .05$).

The results also reveal that role of leader in planning the preschool operation makes the strongest contribution to the provision of quality of interaction ($\beta = .30$, $p < .05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 5.2 is supported as they are positively associated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership roles in preschool education</th>
<th>Unstandardized coeff. B</th>
<th>Standardized coeff. $\beta$</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possession of leadership quality</td>
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<td>.09</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>.085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning of preschool operation</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>6.72</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection with stakeholders</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>.170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of learning and teaching</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.21*</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivation of school culture</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>.048</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05

Table 6.27: Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of interactive quality (parents respondents)

Secondly, it is shown that the provision of quality of interaction has a significant association with the management of learning and teaching ($\beta = .21$, $p < .05$). Thus, Hypothesis 5.4 is accepted as they are positively related.

Thirdly, the results also disclose a poor positive relationship between the provision of interactive quality and cultivation of school culture ($\beta = .10$, $p < .05$). Since there is still a positive relationship between them, Hypothesis 5.5 is accepted.
6.4.2.2.6 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF TEACHERS and leadership roles in preschool education

This section examines the link between quality of teachers and leadership roles in preschool education. The following hypotheses were proposed to identify the relationship between leadership roles and the provision of quality teachers.

**Hypothesis 6.1:** Provision of quality teachers is positively related to possession of leadership quality

**Hypothesis 6.2:** Provision of quality teachers is positively related to planning of preschool operation

**Hypothesis 6.3:** Provision of quality teachers is positively related to connection with stakeholders

**Hypothesis 6.4:** Provision of quality teachers is positively related to management of learning and teaching

**Hypothesis 6.5:** Provision of quality teachers is positively related to cultivation of school culture

Table 6.28 shows the results of the analyses. The outcomes illustrate that the leadership roles explain 37.0 per cent of variance in the provision of quality of teachers in preschool education ($R^2 = .36, F = 62.21, p < .05$).

The largest beta coefficient ($\beta$) is .29 ($p < .05$) which is for management of learning and teaching. Therefore, Hypothesis 6.4 is accepted as the results delineate a positive association between the provision of quality of teachers and the management of learning and teaching.
Secondly, leader’s roles in planning the preschool operation makes a positive contribution to the provision of quality of teachers ($\beta = .24$, $p < .05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 6.2 is accepted because there is a positive relationship between them.

Thirdly, the results reveal a link between the provision of quality of teachers and preschool leaders that possess leadership quality ($\beta = .13$, $p < .05$). Consequently for this reason, Hypothesis 6.1 is accepted.

### 6.4.2.3 Results for Hypotheses Testing- The Teachers Group

This part of the chapter explains the results for the teachers group. There are five quality factors that are hypothetically tested with reference to leadership roles in preschool education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership roles in preschool education</th>
<th>Unstandardized coeff. B</th>
<th>Standardized coeff. $\beta$</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possession of leadership quality</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>.017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning of preschool operation</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection with stakeholders</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>.078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of learning and teaching</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.29*</td>
<td>5.93</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivation of school culture</td>
<td>-.01*</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.916</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.28: Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of teachers (parents respondents)

* $p < .05$
6.4.2.3.1 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF SCHOOL VALUES and leadership roles in preschool education

This section investigates the link between the provision of quality of school values and leadership roles in preschool education. The following hypotheses were established to identify the relationship between various leadership roles in preschool education and the provision of quality of school values.

**Hypothesis 7.1**: Provision of quality of school values is positively related to possession of leadership quality

**Hypothesis 7.2**: Provision of quality of school values is positively related to planning of preschool operation

**Hypothesis 7.3**: Provision of quality of school values is positively related to connection with stakeholders

**Hypothesis 7.4**: Provision of quality of school values is positively related to management of learning and teaching

**Hypothesis 7.5**: Provision of quality of school values is positively related to cultivation of school culture

The outcomes of the analyses are presented in Table 6.29. The results indicate the total leadership roles explain 42% of the provision of quality of school values which is considered as high ($R^2 = .42$, $F = 18.34$ $p < .05$).

It is also revealed that the planning of preschool operation has the strongest link to the provision of quality of school values ($\beta = .20$, $p < .05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 7.2 is accepted as there is a positive relationship between them.
### Table 6.29: Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of school values (teachers respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership roles in preschool education</th>
<th>Unstandardized coeff. B</th>
<th>Standardized coeff. β</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possession of leadership quality</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>.106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning of preschool operation</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection with stakeholders</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>.157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of learning and teaching</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>.070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivation of school culture</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>.056</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.05

#### 6.4.2.3.2 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF SCHOOL ATMOSPHERE and leadership roles in preschool education

This section investigates the link between the provision of quality of school atmosphere and the leadership roles in preschool education. The following hypotheses were formulated to identify the relationship between the various management aspects and the provision of quality of school atmosphere.

*Hypothesis 8.1: Provision of quality of school atmosphere is positively related to possession of leadership quality*

*Hypothesis 8.2: Provision of quality of school atmosphere is positively related to planning of preschool operation*

*Hypothesis 8.3: Provision of quality of school atmosphere is positively related to connection with stakeholders*

*Hypothesis 8.4: Provision of quality of school atmosphere is positively related to management of learning and teaching*
Hypothesis 8.5: Provision of quality of school atmosphere is positively related to cultivation of school culture

The results are presented in Table 6.30. It is revealed that the value of $R^2$ is .16 ($F = 5.66$, $p < .05$) which indicates 20% of leadership roles explain the provision of quality of school atmosphere.

The results identify the cultivation of school culture as the strongest contributor in predicting the provision of quality of school atmosphere ($\beta = -.27$, $p < .05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 8.5 is supported as there is a positive relationship between them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership roles in preschool education</th>
<th>Unstandardized coeff. B</th>
<th>Standardized coeff. $\beta$</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possession of leadership quality</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>.241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning of preschool operation</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection with stakeholders</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>.252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of learning and teaching</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>.192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivation of school culture</td>
<td>-.28</td>
<td>-.27*</td>
<td>-2.50</td>
<td>.014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.30: Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of school atmosphere (teachers respondents)

Secondly, there is an association between leader’s roles in planning the preschool operation and the provision of quality of school atmosphere ($\beta = .25$, $p < .05$). Due to their positive relationship, Hypothesis 8.2 is therefore accepted.
6.4.2.3.3 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING and leadership roles in preschool education

This section investigates the link between the provision of quality of health and wellbeing and leadership roles in preschool education. The following hypotheses were established to identify the relationship between them:

_Hypothesis 9.1: Provision of quality of health and wellbeing is positively related to possession of leadership quality_

_Hypothesis 9.2: Provision of quality of health and wellbeing is positively related to planning of preschool operation_

_Hypothesis 9.3: Provision of quality of health and wellbeing is positively related to connection with stakeholders_

_Hypothesis 9.4: Provision of quality of health and wellbeing is positively related to management of learning and teaching_

_Hypothesis 9.5: Provision of quality of health and wellbeing is positively related to cultivation of school culture_

The outcomes regarding their association are presented in Table 6.31. It is shown that the value of adjusted $R^2$ is .22 ($F = 7.80$, $p < .05$) which indicates 22% of leadership roles explain the provision of quality of health and wellbeing in preschool education.

The results also revealed that the planning of preschool operation is the strongest contributor to predict the provision of quality of health and wellbeing ($\beta = .38$, $p < .05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 9.2 is supported since there is a positive relationship between them.
Table 6.31: Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of health and wellbeing (teachers respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership roles in preschool education</th>
<th>Unstandardized coeff. B</th>
<th>Standardized coeff. β</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>.08</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning of preschool operation</td>
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<td>.38*</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection with stakeholders</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>.287</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management of learning and teaching</td>
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<td>.02</td>
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<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.46</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

6.4.2.3.4 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF TEACHERS and leadership roles in preschool education

This section investigates the relationship between the provision of quality of teachers and roles of leadership involved in preschool education. The following hypotheses were established to identify the association between them.

**Hypothesis 10.1:** Provision of quality of teachers is positively related to possession of leadership quality

**Hypothesis 10.2:** Provision of quality of teachers is positively related to planning of preschool operation

**Hypothesis 10.3:** Provision of quality of teachers is positively related to connection with stakeholders

**Hypothesis 10.4:** Provision of quality of teachers is positively related to management of learning and teaching
**Hypothesis 10.5: Provision of quality of teachers is positively related to cultivation of school culture**

Table 6.3 illustrates the results for the relationships between the variables. It is evident that the value of adjusted $R^2$ is .26 ($F = 9.55, p < .05$) and this indicates that 26% of leadership roles explain the provision of quality of teachers in preschool education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership roles in preschool education</th>
<th>Unstandardized coeff. B</th>
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<th>P-value</th>
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<td><strong>.007</strong></td>
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<td>.088</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.63</td>
<td>.530</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.32: Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of teachers (teachers respondents)

Of the five leadership roles, planning of preschool operation is seemed the strongest predictor of the provision of quality of teachers ($β = .30, p < .05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 10.2 is accepted since there is a positive relationship between them.
6.4.2.3.5 The relationship between provision of QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING FACILITIES and leadership roles in preschool education

This section looks at the relationship between the provision of quality of teaching and learning facilities and the leadership roles in preschool education. The following hypotheses were set up to identify their relationships.

_Hypothesis 11.1: Provision of quality of teaching and learning facilities is positively related to possession of leadership quality_

_Hypothesis 11.2: Provision of quality of teaching and learning facilities is positively related to planning of preschool operation_

_Hypothesis 11.3: Provision of quality of teaching and learning facilities is positively related to connection with stakeholders_

_Hypothesis 11.4: Provision of quality of teaching and learning facilities is positively related to management of learning and teaching_

_Hypothesis 11.5: Provision of quality of teaching and learning facilities is positively related to cultivation of school culture_

Table 6.33 elucidates the results for the relationships and it is evident that the value of adjusted $R^2$ is .34 ($F= 13.39, p < .05$). This indicates 37% of leadership roles in preschool education explain the provision of quality of teaching and learning facilities.

The strongest contributor of quality of teaching and learning facilities is the management of learning and teaching ($\beta = .51, p < .05$). Thus, Hypothesis 11.4 is accepted due to their high positive value of relationship.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership roles in preschool education</th>
<th>Unstandardized coeff. B</th>
<th>Standardized coeff. β</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>-.20*</td>
<td>-1.99</td>
<td>.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning of preschool operation</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection with stakeholders</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>.093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of learning and teaching</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.51*</td>
<td>5.01</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivation of school culture</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>.246</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.3: Summary of multiple regression statistics for the predictor of quality of teaching and learning facilities (teachers respondents)

Secondly, the data also revealed that there is a link between possession of leadership quality and provision of quality of teaching and learning facilities ($\beta = -.20, p < .05$). Therefore, Hypothesis 11.1 is supported as there is a positive relationship between them.

### 6.5 Summary

The quantitative analysis makes it clear that there are similarities and dissimilarities between teachers and parents when analysing the indicators of preschool service quality. From the analysis, parents highlighted six aspects of quality that were essential in preschool education: (1) quality of school values, (2) quality of educational experience, (3) quality of school atmosphere, (4) quality of health and wellbeing, (5) quality of interaction and (6) quality of teachers. Meanwhile, in this study teachers pointed five aspects of quality: (1) quality of school values, (2) quality of school atmosphere, (3) quality of health and wellbeing, (4) quality of teachers and (5) quality of teaching and learning facilities.
The results on t-test revealed that differences on racial or ethnic backgrounds and educational backgrounds of parents led to different perceptions on preschool service quality. This shows there were significant differences of Malay and non-Malay parents in viewing the six aspects of quality in preschool education. This test also showed that parents with different educational backgrounds influenced their perceptions.

From the teachers’ views on the other hand, only the provision of quality of health and wellbeing was perceived differently by teachers from Malay and non-Malay backgrounds. It is also found that teachers with SPM qualification and higher academic qualification had different explanation on the quality of teaching and learning facilities.

Finally, this chapter identified the relationships between the provision of service quality and leadership roles in preschool education. From the results, the leadership role in planning the preschool operation was seen as the most important in providing service quality. Besides, it is important for the preschool management to put concern on managing the learning and teaching process as it is the core service in the preschool. Leaders that were able to cultivate and introduce one influential culture in preschool could enhance the quality due to the image developed from it. Lastly, leaders that possessed skills and were charismatic in leading and administering the preschools also contributed to service quality. The detailed discussion on the findings will be discussed in Chapter Seven.
CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

The sections of the study are brought together and interlocked to form a coherent image which clarifies the factors of service quality in preschool education and the aspects of leadership that are important to achieve the quality. The findings in chapter five and chapter six are discussed to further understand on why the elements are important from the views of government as preschool education provider, parents and teachers. This chapter also addresses implications and limitations of the study, recommendations for future research and end up with the conclusion.

7.2 Factors contributing to service quality in public preschools in Malaysia

In chapter five, the interviews with officers in government agencies, teachers and parents revealed their perceptions on factors which were important to develop quality preschools. While in chapter six, the quantitative analysis, specifically using factor analysis was implied to identify the quality factors from the perceptions of parents and teachers. Finally, based on these analyses, the factors contributing to service quality in Malaysian public preschools are concluded in Figure 7.1:
This thesis identified seven main factors that constitute the quality of public preschool education in Malaysia. The factor of school values consists of elements emphasized in the preschools: the emphasis on English language, Islamic education and multicultural values. Second, the factor of school atmosphere focuses on the safe environment of the preschool and its location suitability. The quality of preschool education is also reflected from the practices in students’ daily routines which are safety and health practices; and the positive interactions of children with teachers and peers. Besides, the other important factor that indicates quality is teachers. This indicator lists
five aspects of teachers that may support the quality of preschool: academic qualification, experience, trained, personality and job engagement. Preschool quality also is determined based on the interactions of teachers and the school management with the parents. The final factor is the educational experience that consists preschool program structures for children, group size and teacher-students ratio.

### 7.2.1 School values

The school values are the elements in education fostered to enhance the values and advantages of a preschool. In this topic, the school values are explained by the implementation of English language, the emphasis of Islamic education and the exposure to multicultural integration among students. These three important elements were confirmed as the quality contributors in preschools. In Malaysian preschools, at least one of these elements become the core values of one preschool.

#### 7.2.1.1 English emphasis

The perceptions of stakeholders on public preschools in Malaysia showed English language as essential in providing quality. The emphasis on the English language is important due to the government’s awareness on its affects for the future human capital. The government raised the poor English proficiency among graduates had been consistently ranked as one of the top five issues facing Malaysian employers since 2006 (Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025, 2012). As non-native speakers, English language is a difficult language for some Malaysians. Thus, the enhancement on students’ English skills is a need.
Until the thesis is written, there is still no specific plan put by the government to enhance the English language implementation in public preschools except the short courses or trainings on English language for teachers. Indeed, the teachers in preschools from the four government agencies (MOE, KEMAS, PERPADUAN and SIRD) teach the language regardless of their ability in English proficiency. Preschool institution even though is an important part in Malaysian education, the effort on strengthening English language is still not heavily emphasized like in primary, secondary or tertiary levels. In Tenth Malaysia Plan 2011-2015, the improvement on teaching and learning of English in primary and secondary schools are well-planned. Through the introduction of a new curriculum in primary schools that stresses five key skill areas: reading, speaking and listening, writing, grammar and language arts, the government expects the quality of students’ English skills to increase.

This finding is truly supported with a research by Ahmad et al. (2004) in which they emphasize on improving English in Malaysian preschools. The quality in the aspect of English proficiency can only be achieved when teachers promote a lot of readings, practice the students to communicate in English; as well as adequate books and learning facilities provided by the government.

‘Emphasis on English language’ is an emerged element in factors of Malaysian preschool service quality from this research. Most probably this element is not emphasized in other literatures as it is not an issue for countries that use English as their main language.
7.2.1.2 Islamic education

This thesis found Islamic education as essential in Malaysian public preschool. Parents in Malaysia preferred preschools that emphasized on Islamic education in the hope of inculcating particular religious values in their young ages (Borhan, 2004). The factor on Islamic education as part of quality factors is related to Dahari and Ya’s (2011) study that confirms the significance of religious value in shaping good moral and attitude of the children.

From the Basic Foundation Module in the National Preschool Standard Curriculum 2010, it is clearly stated the composition of Islamic education and Moral education (for non-Muslims) to be taught in preschools. However, the implementation of Islamic education in preschools provided by each of government agencies is dissimilar and not strong enough to be part of the preschool curriculum. It is contradicted with the government’s aspiration for higher levels of education that has their own Islamic education curriculum. In fact, formal classes on the education are opened based on the availability of qualified teachers (own certificate to teach Islamic education) to teach Islamic education and upon request of parents.

Nevertheless, with the fact that religious education is increasingly demanded in preschools nowadays, the government has to prepare proper and systematic Islamic education learning and teachers are seemed to hold an important role (Marzuki, 2008). Besides the basic foundation, the contemplative structure is also helpful to develop the students’ spiritual domain. In short, the teachers have to implement the contemplation method in six preschool components: language and communication, cognitive development, spiritual and moral, social emotion development, physical development; and creativity and aesthetics in order to provide strong understanding religion in everyday life (Rahman et al., 2012).
Most of the Western literatures do not put the element of religion as important factor in preschool service quality. This is new knowledge that addressed from this study which concern of religious element (particularly religion of Islam) to be part of service quality elements. It is a unique theory that suits Malaysian context and perhaps other Islamic countries.

7.2.1.3 Encouragement on multicultural integration

The other unique element of preschool quality that was derived from the research was the multicultural integration. In Malaysia Education Blueprint, the government encouraged the unity enhancement by embracing diversity in public primary and secondary schools. Through the results, preschool educators in Malaysia are seemed to cope with the demands of a multicultural population. This situation indicates the need for multicultural inputs in the preschool curriculum which includes the philosophy, aims and objectives, content, activities and assessment that should be carried out by the preschool educators (Hashim et al., 2010).

In public preschools, the focus on unity and multicultural integrations are not strongly emphasized except for PERPADUAN preschools. The lack of focus might be because of the imbalance proportion of students from different backgrounds in the preschools. All SIRD students are Malay and Muslim. Majority of students in KEMAS and MOE preschools are Malay. PERPADUAN is the only government department that conditioned its preschools to have various cultural and religious backgrounds of students. Despite of that, the researcher believed the introduction and exposure of Malaysian multicultural society is still important even if the students in one class belong to only one particular background. It is important for students to be
aware and understand the variety of cultural backgrounds and the sensitivity of each culture (Hashim et al., 2010).

Furthermore, preschool teachers need to be equipped with the appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes to promote multicultural education. Government efforts such as reviewing teacher training programs as well as enhancing teachers’ openness, self-reflective abilities, commitment to social justice and positive intercultural experiences are essential in order to make sure the teachers gain deeper understandings (Phoon et al., 2012).

The multiracial integration is an important preschool quality element in Malaysian context due to its significance roles to harmonious society.

7.2.2 Environmental safety and school ambience

The thesis addressed the factor of school atmosphere was the other strong factor contributing to preschool service quality. In addition with the importance of lesson planning, the spatial arrangements or physical environment are equally important (Morrow, 2007). Based on the findings, the selection of Malaysia’s public preschool buildings and locations is a crucial matter. The differences of building structures lead to dissimilar quality of services provided to the students. This study is supported by Moore (2010) a researcher that introduced the Children’s Physical Environments Rating Scale (CPERS). CPERS is used to assess the quality of the physical environment of early childhood education. Moore (2010) concurs that the quality of preschools is related to the quality of the designed physical environment. In this thesis, the environmental safety and school location are the most highlighted issues.
As reported in Chapter 5, the suitability of environment and location of preschools environmental safety are essential. The buildings and locations of the preschools play important roles in predicting the quality. This finding is in line with a study by Abbas and Othman (2010) that see the importance of well-defined spaces in Malaysian preschools which was proved affecting the students’ behavior.

This thesis addressed different structures of buildings in public preschools lead to dissimilar quality services. For instance, preschools that are located in lower ground of low-cost apartments, shared community halls and old buildings cause safety issues. As the government agencies possessed or rented dissimilar types of buildings and premises, some preschools were seemed as not following the preschool standard. The Malaysian Blueprint focuses mainly on schools provided by MOE including the preschools. Based on the observations, some PERPADUAN, KEMAS and SIRD preschools were not suitable and safe enough to run the education. Thus, this leads to different service quality of preschool education provided by the government.

To conclude, the environmental safety and school ambience are the ‘must’ elements in preschool education due to the big impacts to the quality services.

### 7.2.3 Health and positive wellbeing practices

Health and safety routines in preschool education were clearly discussed as part of important element in preschool service quality (Espinosa, 2002, Cryer et al., 2003; Phillipsen et al., 1997). As guided by Ministry of Health Malaysia, all preschools and child care centers must meet the standard of health practices. Based on the researcher’s observations, majority of the preschools
complied with the guidelines. Healthy and nutritious food, clean toilets and education on health practices are the basic important aspects to be emphasized in preschools.

In assuring the students’ wellbeing, this thesis addressed teaching students with love and avoiding the use of rude words or actions were essential. This type of psychological strategy could shape a child to be well-behaved as loving and caring are the most important needs in child’s life (Abu, 2007). Most of teachers were kind and clearly understood their roles as teachers. However there were still a number of teachers that used teaching methods by shouting and slamming table with long ruler in order to control the students in class. The teachers acted in that ways due to challenges they faced in managing big number of students in one class which could reach to twenty-five. Besides, the stressful work in managing preschools and dealing with parents and school leaders also might lead to negative behavior of teachers. This is supported by Ambotang and Hashim (2010) that see the relationship between work environment and stress among preschool teachers in Malaysia.

Therefore, teachers’ emotions and satisfactions in work are important to create a positive environment of learning. This issue is related to job engagement that is also highlighted in this thesis.

7.2.4 Teachers

This study identified significant influence of teachers in developing quality of in preschool education. They are the implementers of curriculum, planners of teaching and learning activities and role models for students. The academic qualifications, experience, trainings attended,
personality and job engagement are the impactful factors that lead to quality of Malaysia’s public preschools.

### 7.2.4.1 Academic qualification and teachers’ training

It is undeniable that the quality of preschool education depended on the teachers’ academic qualifications and trainings they attended (Siraj-Blatchford and Manni, 2006; Abdullah, 2002; Clarke-Stewart et al., 2002; Dora, 2006; Yamamoto and Li, 2012; Iyamu, 1998). The value of preschool education in Malaysia nowadays is increased when the teachers own higher academic qualification. Most of private preschools in Malaysia employed teachers with at least diploma in early childhood education, which becomes a competitive advantage for them. Public preschools however are still left behind in hiring high-educated teachers as majority of them are *SPM* holders. Only MOE preschools conditioned their teachers to hold at least diploma degree.

In order to meet parents’ requirements, preschool teachers must equip themselves with appropriate professional qualifications and the right skills. The finding in this thesis supported by Abdullah et al. (2011) that confirm the teaching efficacy of degree holders is higher than non-degree holders. Currently the number of public preschool teachers with at least diploma degrees is very small. Therefore, Malaysian public preschools should be improved by hiring teachers with higher academic qualification and providing wider opportunity for current teachers to pursue their studies. This study found that the professionalism development of teachers should become part of priorities in preschool education. By offering distance learning and tutorial services, teachers would get opportunity to develop their profession as professional preschool teachers.
This thesis addressed well-trained teachers as important in providing service quality. According to Honig and Hirallal (1998), among (1) academic level (2) years in service and (3) training, training in early childhood education and child development is crucially implicated in ensuring more positive interactions of teachers with preschoolers. Training that involves many aspects are significant whether teachers are providing positive emotional inputs such as smiling, conversing, reading, singing, role playing, questioning, modeling, and expanding language. Therefore, teachers with more training are far more likely to enrich children's childcare experience with positive language interactions.

As training for preschool teachers is significantly impacting the service quality of the education, the government agencies are supposed to provide it sufficiently to the teachers. Based on the results of the analysis, the types and durations of trainings for preschool teachers by each government agency vary. Until the thesis is written, there is still no standardization of trainings for public preschool teachers even though this issue is already mentioned by early childhood education expert in Malaysia. Majzub (2003) in her public lecture questioned on the sufficiency and efficacy of the trainings that were dissimilar among the government agencies.

7.2.4.2 Job engagement

This study revealed quality of services in preschool education could be achieved when the teachers were engaged with the job; i.e. clearly understood the mission of the schools and their responsibility as teachers; and high interest of the work. Teachers’ engagement could be seen through their connections with students. Since the nature of the job is educating the children, a close relationship between teachers and students could encourage teaching and learning process.
According to Ahmad and Sahak (2009), academic achievement and student behavior are influenced by the quality of the teacher and student relationship. The more the teachers connect or communicate with their students, the more likely they are to be able to help students learn quickly. Having the freedom to shape the future and to contribute to students are rated as the highest motivation for teachers (Watt and Richardson, 2008).

Therefore when teachers are given trust to apply their teaching skills, empowered to make decision at school level and clearly understood their roles and responsibility; they may contribute to quality performance. Indirectly, the quality service in education will increase.

### 7.2.5 Facilities

Quality facilities in preschool education are able to improve children’s cognitive, social and emotional development (Stankovic et al., 2006). MOE preschools, PERPADUAN preschools, KEMAS preschool and SIRD preschools were occupied with different quality of facilities and depended on the financial provision the government agencies received.

#### 7.2.5.1 Teaching and learning materials and school infrastructures

The tangibles and resources for teaching and learning contributed to quality of education (Holford and Patkar, 2003; Jusoh et al., 2004; Kwan and Ng, 1999; Sohail and Shaikh, 2004; Joseph et al., 2005; Jain et al., 2011). Through this research, Malaysian public preschools are still lagged behind in terms of providing adequate and up-to-date teaching and learning materials. The most obvious needs in preschools nowadays are the technological assistance, specifically the use of computer and internet in teaching and learning process. Due to the big influence of
technology in education, Malaysian government should think on providing at least one computer and internet access so that the children will be exposed to more fun interactive learning.

In chapter 5, some public preschools were reported as facing challenges in providing quality physical facilities such as appropriate building, suitable chairs and desks; and adequate playing facilities. The types of government agencies also contribute to the issue of school infrastructures. For instance, SIRD, an organization that stands under state government earn limited funds as it is not funded by federal government. Hence, it highly depends on Selangor Alms Giving Centre which is a centre that collects alms from Muslims in Selangor. The study also identified that MOE preschools are well-equipped than *PERPADUAN* and *KEMAS* preschools. This can be assumed due to specific focus of MOE on education in terms of buildings and facilities compared to the other two agencies. The availability and suitability of the facilities became a crucial issue in Malaysian public preschools. As supported by Stankovic et al. (2006) the conditions of structure and space such as comfort, good illumination, non-slippery floor faces and usage of warm colours can be correlated to positive results at children.

### 7.2.6 School interactions and educational experience

The interactions and communications between educational organization and stakeholders are key factors of quality services provided (Cannon and Sheth, 1994; Bitner, 1990; Sohail and Shaikh, 2004; Abdullah, 2002). This thesis identified that good relationship and interactions of preschool management and parents are essential as part of service quality. Involvement of parents should be appreciated by school management so that a warm relationship could be maintained.
It is found that good interactions of teachers with children also contribute to positive and fun learning experience to children. The educational experience could shape the children’s behaviour and encourage their determination to learn more at school. The finding is associated with a research by Henricsson and Rydell (2004) that see problems of externalizing (aggression, temper outbursts and hyperactivity) and internalizing (depressive-like or anxious behaviour, crying and clinging) as having links with teacher-student relationship quality. Hamre and Pianta (2001) also confirm that interactions between teachers and students are important in developing students’ behaviour. In conclusion, the preschool management has to put high concern on teachers and staffs to apply good interactions and positive educational experience.

7.3 Links between leadership roles in preschool education and preschool service quality

In the previous sections, the factors contributing to preschool service quality from the perceptions of government officers, teachers and parents had been discussed. These quality factors (school values, educational experience, school atmosphere, health and wellbeing, teachers, interactions; and facilities in teaching & learning) then were linked with the leadership roles in preschool education to identify their relationships. As reported in Chapter Six, the tests in finding the relationships were done to two groups of respondents: parents and teachers. Figure 7.2 explains the influences of preschool leaders’ roles on the quality of preschool education from parents’ and teachers’ views.
From the results, it was revealed that leadership roles in planning the preschool operation were the most important roles of preschool leader in providing quality service. It was evident from the results that quality factors in school values, health and wellbeing; and interaction were achieved through proper planning of the leaders.

From the researcher’s view, planning of preschool operation is the most important leadership roles because through planning a proper and standardized quality of preschool education can be obtained. Planning happens to be the most important roles other than possessing leadership quality, managing teaching and learning and cultivating school culture as all these elements are
generally included in planning. The leaders have to plan and think wisely before applying one decision and oversee the implications of their actions.

Clear vision planning and values are essential in achieving good school performance (Othman & Rauf 2009). From the researcher’s observations, it was true that the school values i.e. religious values or cultural values implementation needed careful and clear planning to achieve preschool’s objectives and aims. For instance, the preschool’s plan in preparing the input to students and readiness of teachers would lead to the successful achievement. The finding from parents and teachers extends the existing argument of the roles of a good plan of vision and values. However it emphasizes new elements in ‘values’ that are originated from culture and religion.

Furthermore, Othman and Rauf (2009) mention on the aspect of ‘governance and social’ that explains the need for leaders to provide safe and conducive school environment. Parents and teachers viewed ‘planning’ by the leaders could lead to better achievement in the quality of health and wellbeing. Planning that considers any issue regarding school routines and teachers’ performance will enhance the health and wellbeing quality in preschools. In the case of Malaysian public preschools, an appropriate plan to place a preschool in suitable building is very important to make sure the safeness and security. The need of planning is also supported by Prestine and Nelson (2005) that claim leaders to consider three plans of actions: the individual, the interpersonal and the educational institution.

A good communication quality of preschool heads with parents and subordinates is a key factor of school improvement (Dora 2006). The study showed that parents believed when the leaders managed to plan meetings and provide adequate information, the quality of interactions could be
improved. Furthermore, by discussing the whole plan of school to parents, this would avoid misunderstanding among parents and community when activities that involved religious or cultural matters.

Kalkan and Akman (2009) prove a good school leadership plays great roles in assuring comfort and adequate infrastructures in school. This thesis addressed that parents linked the quality of school atmosphere with preschool leaders that possessed good leadership character in preschool. This indicated that leaders that were sensitive with students’ and teachers’ needs would concern more on providing adequate facilities and comfort environment.

Rodd (1997) mentions through the management and supervision teachers during teaching and learning process, quality in education can be achieved. Leaders that emphasized on learning and teaching was seen by parents as contributing to the quality of teachers. Since teaching and learning are the core services in preschools, the continuous observations and the encouragement for teachers to further studies could improve the quality of teachers. Qualification is seen as important factors to contribute to learning and teaching quality (Barnett, 2004). In this research the teachers believed preschools that had good management of teaching and learning would assure the adequacy and suitability of teaching and learning facilities. Thus, sufficient teaching materials, technological equipment, playing facilities and toys are the crucial needs the leaders should be alert at.

Othman and Rauf (2009) emphasizes that preschool leaders should cultivate school culture in order to provide quality of educational experience for students. From the research, parents looked the implementation of cultural and religious values were best done during group activities in classroom. For instance, by putting students in group of different cultural backgrounds, they
will be encouraged to understand and respect each other. As majority of classes in MOE, KEMAS and SIRD preschools are Muslim students, it will be easier to teach *du’as* (prayers) for student before the class begin and during meal time. The action taken by the school leader or preschool supervisor through promoting school culture is fundamental for change in educational context (Dora, 2005). Indirectly, it influenced the quality of school atmosphere. Through the influence of leaders, the cultural or religious values could be implemented.

Supervision and support from school leaders may improve the quality of education provided (Rodd 1997). It is confirmed from this research when the teachers concern on the importance of planning on teacher selection. Proper planning that is made at department or school levels of management will ensure the quality of teachers when the academic qualification and appearance are taken into account.

In conclusion, leader’s roles in planning school programs, managing teaching and learning process, cultivating school culture and possessing leadership quality have significant relationships with the quality service provided in preschool education.

### 7.4 Implications of the study

This thesis gives the implications on two important areas which are service quality and leadership roles in preschool education.

#### 7.4.1 Implications on preschool service quality

This study provides clear understanding on how the public preschool quality were perceived and expected to be. The highlighted quality values could provide the government some guidelines on
what elements that should be emphasized. This study will be beneficial for public preschool providers towards quality improvement. It is also beneficial for all providers and educators in early childhood education industry in order to understand the context of quality not only in the range of students’ needs, but also by taking into account the external aspects such as religion, culture and country environment.

This study uncovers the unique quality factors in preschool education that are not highlighted in many literatures. Quality elements namely English language emphasis, insertion of Islamic education and exposure on multicultural integration are the local context of Malaysian preschools that are important to be taken into account by preschool providers.

7.4.2 Implications on leadership roles in preschool education

This study breaks a new perspective of research in leadership particularly in preschool education that has not been done yet in Malaysia. It proves that educational leadership in preschool education is also essential even though the preschools are only small institutions. With this study, the variety of government agencies could sit and think together on how to achieve the quality of preschool education. Given the various types of organizations providing the preschool education, this thesis is useful as it emphasizes on leaders’ roles that must be presented to confirm the preschool established are well-managed and quality-oriented.

This study brings the government agencies (MOE, PERPADUAN, KEMAS and SIRD) to seriously develop a proper structure of preschool leadership to ensure the educational learning process are obtaining optimum standard of quality. Furthermore, the roles of leaders in preschool education that had been identified in this study are suitably applied in Malaysian preschool.
7.4.3 Contributions to theory

Given the theories in factors of preschool service quality had been discussed in many literatures, this research looked the aspects of service quality from Malaysian context. This research has added new elements of quality which did not mentioned in any literature. The unique culture and composition of this country brings new additional elements in the theories: the emphasis on Islamic education and English language; and the integration among multicultural backgrounds. These elements are specifically related to an Islamic country with non-native English speakers and multi-ethnic citizens.

This study also addresses the roles of leaders that are essential to be applied in improving quality. Planning the school operation, possessing leadership quality, managing teaching and learning process; and cultivating culture are the roles of leaders in Malaysian preschool education. This new theory is suitable for a country with collectivism and high power distance culture, where the leaders plan and decide while the subordinates follow.

7.5 Recommendations for Future Research

The research can be extended by conducting a study in Malaysian private preschools. The findings on quality provision and leadership in the private sector are worth to be compared to see the gaps between the two preschool sectors. This will be a beneficial study by focusing on quality practices and roles of leadership in providing quality education.

The study also can be extended in other states in Malaysia especially in Sabah and Sarawak which are situated in East of Malaysia. This study may be interesting as the two states have big
number of different tribes and many of them live in very remote areas. Thus the needs on quality will be different from the current thesis which looked at Klang Valley area, a developed area in Malaysia. This study can also be further investigated by looking at the effectiveness and applicability of current preschool education policy which is applied to all types of preschool education. The study could identify clearly the needs of one preschool concerning its objectives of development, its providers and its ability to offer quality educational service. Finally, one single study on leadership roles and their effectiveness in public preschool education using case study analysis is worth to be conducted as each agency has different structures of preschool management system. Thus, the suitability in applying the policy and practices can be evaluated in each government agency that provides preschool education.

7.6 Conclusion

This thesis concludes that providing quality services on various aspects in preschool education is essential. The government plays important roles to ensure the quality to be achieved. It is found that there are factors that lead to preschool quality in regard with Malaysian local context. The preschool providers, teachers and parents looked the emphasis on Islamic education, English language and multicultural integration are important to be taken into account as part of preschool service quality factors. Concerning on the multi-providers of preschool education in Malaysia, the quality factors should be viewed in broader lens than physical or tangible quality factors. This thesis also concludes that the leadership roles are essential in Malaysian public preschools. Although MOE, PERPADUAN, KEMAS and SIRD manage preschool education independently,
the leadership roles hold by head masters or preschool supervisors are similar. The findings revealed that the preschool leaders played important roles in planning the preschool operation to ensure the quality of education can be provided, which is in line with Bajunid’s (1996) study on school improvement. Proper planning by Head Masters in MOE and SIRD preschools; and Preschool Supervisors in PERPADUAN and KEMAS preschools in performing teaching and learning process, managing teachers and managing finance are crucial in establishing quality public preschool education in Malaysia.
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202


References


References


207


RMIT BUSINESS COLLEGE HUMAN ETHICS ADVISORY NETWORK

Prescribed Consent Form for Persons Participating In Research Projects Involving Interviews, Questionnaires, Focus Groups or Disclosure of Personal Information

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SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

SCHOOL/CENTRE OF

Name of Participant:

Project Title:

THE MANAGEMENT OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE: A LOOK AT SERVICE QUALITY

Name(s) of Investigators:        (1)

FARAH LAILI MUDA ISMAIL

Phone:    +613 9925 1683

(2)

(3)

Phone

1. I have received a statement explaining the interview/questionnaire involved in this project.
2. I consent to participate in the above project, the particulars of which - including details of the interviews or questionnaires - have been explained to me.
3. I authorise the investigator or his or her assistant to interview me or administer a questionnaire.
4. I give my permission to be audio taped:    ☐ Yes    ☐ No
5. I give my permission for my name or identity to be used:    ☐ Yes    ☐ No
6. I acknowledge that:

(a) Having read the Plain Language Statement, I agree to the general purpose, methods and demands of the study.
(b) I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
(c) The project is for the purpose of research and/or teaching. It may not be of direct benefit to me.

(d) The privacy of the information I provide will be safeguarded. However, should information of a private nature need to be disclosed for moral, clinical or legal reasons, I will be given an opportunity to negotiate the terms of this disclosure.

If I participate in a focus group I understand that whilst all participants will be asked to keep the conversation confidential, the researcher cannot guarantee that other participants will do this.

(e) The security of the research data is assured during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published, and a report of the project outcomes will be provided to ______________________ (researcher to specify). Any information which may be used to identify me will not be used unless I have given my permission (see point 5).

Participant’s Consent

Name: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

(Participant)

Name: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

(Witness to signature)

Where participant is under 18 years of age:

I consent to the participation of ___________________________ in the above project.

Signature: (1) ___________________________ (2) ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

(Signatures of parents or guardians)

Name: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

(Witness to signature)

Participants should be given a photocopy of this consent form after it has been signed.
INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERVIEW IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

PROJECT INFORMATION STATEMENT

Project title: THE MANAGEMENT OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE: A LOOK AT SERVICE QUALITY

Investigators:
Farah Laili Muda Ismail  
(PhD Candidate, farahlaili.mudaismail@rmit.edu.au, +613 9925 1683)
Dr. Nattavud Pimpa  
(Senior Supervisor: Senior Lecturer, nattavud.pimpa@rmit.edu.au, +613 9925 1531)

School of Management  
RMIT University  
Level 16, Building 108,  
239 Bourke Street,  
Melbourne,  
Victoria 3000, Australia

Dear Participants,

You are invited to participate in a research project being conducted by Farah Laili Muda Ismail from RMIT University. This information sheet describes the project in straightforward language, or ‘plain English’. Please read this sheet carefully and be confident that you understand its contents before deciding whether to participate. If you have any questions about the project, please ask the investigators.

I am currently a research student in School of Management at RMIT University. This project is being conducted as a part of my PhD. My supervisor for this project is Dr. Nattavud Pimpa. The project has been approved by the RMIT Business College Human Ethics Advisory Network.

The aim of this research is to study the preschools’ service quality provided by four government agencies in Malaysia, which are Ministry of Education, Ministry of Rural and Regional Development, Ministry of National Unity and Social Integration and State Religious Department. This research will investigate factors contributing to service quality in preschool educational service. It also attempts to identify the relationship between quality factors perceived by various stakeholders and the management aspects in the preschools. Besides, the local and global factors challenging the management of preschool educational
service will be investigated in this study. Overall, this study aims to gain more understanding on the complexity of the management in providing service quality in Malaysian preschool education.

There are no perceived risks associated with participation outside the participants’ normal day-to-day activities. As a matter of fact, your responses will contribute to better understanding on the service quality and management of preschool educational service in Malaysia. The finding of this study will be disseminated in conferences and published in academic journals.

I am inviting you to participate in this interview so as to provide us with an understanding on the nature of preschool educational service. Your voluntary participation in this research project is kindly requested. The research requires your knowledge and experience on the preschool educational service provided by government agencies. The interview will take place at your premises and at a time that is convenient to you. The interview will last approximately 30 to 45 minutes and will be digitally-recorded but only with your consent, to ensure the accuracy of the transcription of interview conversation. During the interview you have the right to withdraw partially or completely or refuse to answer any further questions or request to stop recording at any stage any time during the project. Moreover, you have the right to ask any questions regarding my research at any time. Participants may also request the return or removal of any identifiable data they have given.

Your privacy and confidentiality will be strictly maintained in such a manner that you will not be identified in the thesis report or any publication. Any information that you provide can be disclosed only if (1) it is to protect you or others from harm, (2) a court order is produced, or (3) you provide the researchers with written permission. Interview data will be only seen by my supervisor and examiners who will also protect you from risk.

To ensure that data collected is protected, the data will be retained for five years upon completion of the project after which time paper records will be shredded and placed in a security recycle bin and electronic data will be deleted/destroyed in a secure manner. All hard data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and soft data in a password protected computer in the office of the investigator in the Graduate School of Business at RMIT University. Data will be saved on the University Network System where practicable (as the system provides a high level of manageable security and data integrity, can provide secure remote access, and is backed up on a regular basis). Only the researcher/s will have access to the data. Data will be kept securely at RMIT for a period of 5 years after the completion of the project before being destroyed.

If you are unduly concerned about your responses to any of questions or if you find participation in the project distressing, you should contact my supervisor as soon as convenient. My supervisor will discuss your concerns with your confidentiality and suggest appropriate follow-up, if necessary.

If you have any queries regarding this project please contact me at (+613) 9925 1683 or (+614) 3217 2879 or email me at farahlaili.mudaismail@rmit.edu.au. You may also contact my principle supervisor Dr. Nattavud Pimpa at (+613) 9925 1531, or email him at nattavud.pimpa@rmit.edu.au.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

Yours Sincerely,
Farah Laili Muda Ismail
PhD Candidate
School of Management
RMIT University
Building 108
239 Bourke Street,
Melbourne, Victoria 3000, Australia

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Executive Officer, RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee, Research & Innovation, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. Details of the complaints procedure: [http://www.rmit.edu.au/governance/complaints/research](http://www.rmit.edu.au/governance/complaints/research)
INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY IN A RESEARCH PROJECT
PROJECT INFORMATION STATEMENT

Project title: THE MANAGEMENT OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE: A LOOK AT SERVICE QUALITY

Investigators:
Farah Laili Muda Ismail
(PhD Candidate, farahlaili.mudaismail@rmit.edu.au, +613 9925 1683)
Dr. Nattavud Pimpa
(Senior Supervisor: Senior Lecturer, nattavud.pimpa@rmit.edu.au, +613 9925 1531)

School of Management
RMIT University
Building 108,
239 Bourke Street,
Melbourne,
Victoria 3000, Australia

Dear Participants,

An Invitation to Participate in Preschool Educational Service Research Project

You are invited to participate in a research project being conducted by Farah Laili Muda Ismail from RMIT University. This information sheet describes the project in straightforward language, or 'plain English'. Please read this sheet carefully and be confident that you understand its contents before deciding whether to participate. If you have any questions about the project, please ask the investigators.

I am currently a research student in the School of Management at RMIT University. This project is being conducted as a part of my PhD. My supervisor for this project is Dr. Nattavud Pimpa. The project has been approved by the RMIT Business College Human Ethics Advisory Network.

The aim of this research is to study the preschools’ service quality provided by four government agencies in Malaysia, which are Ministry of Education, Ministry of Rural and Regional Development, Ministry of National Unity and Social Integration and State Religious Department. This research will investigate factors contributing to service quality in preschool educational service. This research also attempts to study the relationship between quality factors perceived by various stakeholders and the management aspects in the preschools. Besides, the local and global factors challenging the management of preschool
educational service also will be identified to gain more understanding on the complexity of the management in providing service quality.

I am inviting you to participate in this survey so as to provide us with a better understanding of the service quality and management of preschool educational service in Malaysia. This survey will only take 20 to 25 minutes only. Your privacy and confidentiality will be strictly maintained in such a manner that you will not be identified in the thesis report or any publication. Any information that you provide can be disclosed only if (1) it is to protect you or others from harm, (2) a court order is produced, or (3) you provide the researchers with written permission. Interview data will be only seen by my supervisor and examiners who will also protect you from risk.

You can examine the questionnaire before deciding whether you want to participate. The consent form for the survey will not be provided, as the return of the survey implies your consent. Participation in this research is entirely voluntary and anonymous; you may withdraw your participation and any unprocessed data concerning you at any time, without prejudice. You are free to indicate that all information provided is to be treated as confidential. Participants may also request the return or removal of any identifiable data they have given. We would also like to assure you that your non-participation in this research will not result in any discrimination, reduction in the level of care, effect on employment or any other penalty.

If you agree to participate in this study, your views and assistance in providing information and data will be incorporated into a PhD thesis conference proceedings, and scholarly journal articles. You are free to indicate that all information provided is to be treated as confidential. To ensure that data collected is protected, the data will be retained for five years upon completion of the project after which time paper records will be shredded and placed in a security recycle bin and electronic data will be deleted/destroyed in a secure manner. All hard data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and soft data in a password protected computer in the office of the investigator in the School of Management at RMIT University. Data will be saved on the University Network System where practicable (as the system provides a high level of manageable security and data integrity, can provide secure remote access, and is backed up on a regular basis). Only the researcher/s will have access to the data. Data will be kept securely at RMIT for a period of 5 years after the completion of the project before being destroyed.

If you are unduly concerned about your responses to any of questions or if you find participation in the project distressing, you should contact my supervisors as soon as convenient. My supervisor will discuss your concerns with your confidentiality and suggest appropriate follow-up, if necessary.

If you have any queries regarding this project please contact me at (+613) 9925 1683 or (+614) 3217 2879 or email me at farahlaili.mudaismail@rmit.edu.au. You may also contact my principle supervisor Dr. Nattavud Pimpa at (+613) 9925 1531 or email him at nattavud.pimpa@rmit.edu.au.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

Yours Sincerely,

Farah Laili Muda Ismail
PhD Candidate
School of Management
RMIT University
Building 108,
239 Bourke Street,
Melbourne, Victoria 3000, Australia

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Executive Officer, RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee, Research & Innovation, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. Details of the complaints procedure: [http://www.rmit.edu.au/governance/complaints/research](http://www.rmit.edu.au/governance/complaints/research)
Appendices

Appendix C

RMIT UNIVERSITY

Office of
Pro Vice-Chancellor
Business
Building 108, Level 11
239 Bourke Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
Australia
Tel. +61 3 9925 5566
Fax +61 3 9925 5624
www.rmit.edu.au

Ref: Ethics Appl. 1000158

Wednesday, May 26 2010

Farah Laili Muda Ismail
2/246 Gilbert Rd
Preston
Vic 3072

Dear Farah

I am pleased to advise that your application for ethics approval for a Research Project has been approved by the Chair of the Business College Human Ethics Advisory Network. Approval has been granted for the period from 25 May 2010 to 26 July 2013.

The RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) requires the submission of Annual and Final reports. These reports should be forwarded to the Business College Human Ethics Advisory Network Secretary. Annual Reports are due in December for applications submitted prior to September the year concerned. I have enclosed a copy of the Annual/ Final report form for your convenience. Please note that this form also incorporates a request for extension of approval, if required.

Best wishes for your research.

Yours sincerely

Kristina Tsoulis-Reay
Secretary
Business College Human Ethics Advisory Network

Encl.
RMIT BUSINESS
COLLEGE HUMAN ETHICS ADVISORY NETWORK
(BCHEAN)

Application for Approval of Research Project

SUMMARY & APPROVAL

Project Title: The Management of Preschool Education in Malaysia: A Look at Service Quality

Principal Investigator: Farah Laili Muda Ismail

Supervisor: Nattavud Pimpa

Project Category: Category 2

Degree for which research is undertaken (if applicable): PhD

Contact Phone Number: 0432 172 879

School Name: Management

Email Address: farahlaili.mudaismail@rmit.edu.au

BUSINESS COLLEGE HUMAN ETHICS ADVISORY NETWORK USE ONLY:

Date Application Received: 4 May 2010

Business College Human Ethics Advisory Network Register No: 1000158

Period of Approval: 25 May 2010 to 20 July 2013

Comments / Provisos: Approval is subject to appropriate permission being granted by Principals of participating Schools

The Business College Human Ethics Advisory Network assessed the Project as Category 2

Signature: [Signature]

Date: 25 May 2010

Associate Professor Roslyn Russell, BCHEAN Chair
APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN MALAYSIA

With reference to your application, I am pleased to inform you that your application to conduct research in Malaysia has been approved by the Research Promotion and Co-Ordination Committee, Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister’s Department. The details of the approval are as follows:

Researcher’s name: FARAH LAILI BINTI MUDA @ ISMAIL
Passport No. / I. C No: 800521-71-5008
Nationality: MALAYSIAN
Title of Research: “THE MANAGEMENT OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE IN MALAYSIA: A LOOK AT SERVICE QUALITY”

Period of Research Approved: 3 YEARS

2. Please collect your Research Pass in person from the Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister’s Department, Parcel B, Level 1 Block B5, Federal Government Administrative Centre, 62502 Putrajaya and bring along two (2) passport size photographs. You are also required to comply with the rules and regulations stipulated from time to time by the agencies with which you have dealings in the conduct of your research.
3. I would like to draw your attention to the undertaking signed by you that you will submit without cost to the Economic Planning Unit the following documents:

   a) A brief summary of your research findings on completion of your research and before you leave Malaysia; and

   b) Three (3) copies of your final dissertation/publication.

4. Lastly, please submit a copy of your preliminary and final report directly to the State Government where you carried out your research. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

(MUNIRAH ABD. MANAN)
For Director General,
Economic Planning Unit.
E-mail: munirah@epu.gov.my
Tel: 88882809
Fax: 88883961

ATTENTION

This letter is only to inform you the status of your application and **cannot be used as a research pass**.

Cc:

Ketua Setiausaha
Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan
Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia
Aras 1-4, Blok E-8
Kompleks Kerajaan Parcel E
Pusat Pentadbiran Kerajaan Persekutuan
62604 Putrajaya.
Ketua Pengarah
Jabatan Perpaduan Negara Dan Integrasi Nasional
(Jabatan Perdana Menteri)
Aras 7-10, Blok E2, Parcel E
Pusat Pentadbiran Kerajaan Persekutuan
62502 Putrajaya

Ketua Setiausaha
Kenterian Kemajuan Luar Bandar Dan Wilayah
Aras 9, Blok D9, Komplek D
Pusat Pentadbiran Kerajaan Persekutuan
62606 Putrajaya
Appendices

Appendix E1

- Interview questions:

Questions on the nature of the preschool

1. Can you briefly describe the vision of this agency providing preschool educational service?
2. What are the things that the management of this preschool stress on regarding the service provided?
3. Who are the targeted customers for this school?
4. What is the quality of students this preschool expects to produce?
5. What are the differences of the preschool education provided compared to other types of preschools?
6. How do you plan to improve the quality of the preschool?

Questions on service quality in preschool

1. How do you define service quality of preschool education?
2. What are the factors that parents will consider in choosing preschool for their children?
3. Why do you think those factors are important?
4. In your opinion, how the preschool can be determined as providing good (and bad) service quality?
5. In your opinion, what aspects of good management lead to good quality in preschool education?
6. What can the leaders do to improve the quality of preschool education?
7. In your opinion, what are the challenges that our country faced in providing good quality of education?
8. What are the impacts to the education in Malaysia particularly the preschool education when our country is affected by global challenges? (school, students, parents, teachers)
9. How does the educational institution particularly preschool organization counter act the challenges?
10. One organization may be affected from the local factors such as the changes in political situation, economic fluctuations, cultural aspects, sociological aspects or technological changes. What are the examples of local factors that give impacts to preschool education?
11. How do government/ preschool respond to such factors?
12. How would you suggest in improving the service quality of preschool educational service in Malaysia?
Appendices

Appendix E2

- Soalan-soalan temuramah (Interview questions in Malay Language)

Soalan mengenai latar belakang prasekolah

1. Bolehkah anda terangkan matlamat penubuhan prasekolah ini?
2. Apakah perkara/ agenda yang ditekankan oleh pihak agensi di dalam menawarkan perkhipidmatan pendidikan ini?
3. Siapakah golongan fokus bagi sekolah ini?
4. Bagaimanakah kualiti pelajar yang disasarkan oleh pihak sekolah?
5. Apakah perbezaan sekolah ini berbanding dengan prasekolah lain (samada swasta atau kerajaan)?
6. Apakah perancangan anda di dalam memperbaiki kualiti prasekolah ini?

Soalan mengenai kualiti perkhipidmatan di prasekolah

1. Bagaimanakah anda dapat taarifkan kualiti perkhipidmatan di dalam pendidikan?
2. Apakah faktor-faktor yang diambil kira oleh ibubapa di dalam memilih prasekolah untuk anak-anak mereka?
3. Pada pendapat anda, mengapakah faktor-faktor tersebut dianggap penting?
4. Pada pandangan anda, bagaimanakah sesebuah prasekolah itu dapat dikenal pasti sebagai memberi kualiti perkhipidmatan yang baik (atau tidak baik)?
5. Pada pandangan anda, aspek kepimpinan yang bagaimanakah yang dapat mengurus sesebuah prasekolah secara berkesan (samada pihak prasekolah atau pihak kerajaan)?
6. Apakah yang perlu dilakukan oleh pihak pengurusan prasekolah di dalam memperbaiki kualiti perkhipidmatan sesebuah prasekolah?
7. Pada pandangan anda, apakah cabaran yang negara kita hadapi di dalam memberi kualiti pendidikan yang baik? (Secara umum)
8. Apakah kesan ke atas sektor pendidikan di Malaysia khususnya prasekolah apabila dunia dilanda cabaran-cabaran global (contoh: kegawatan ekonomi dunia, wabak penyakit, masalah politik antarabangsa, dll) –
9. Bagaimanakah institusi pendidikan khususnya organisasi prasekolah bertindak balas dengan cabaran-cabaran ini?
10. Sesebuah organisasi boleh dipengaruhi oleh perubahan faktor tempatan seperti faktor politik, ekonomi, budaya, sosiologi dan teknologi. Apakah contoh faktor-faktor tempatan yang memberi kesan kepada pendidikan prasekolah?
11. Bagaimanakah pihak kerajaan/prasekolah bertindak balas dengan faktor-faktor ini?
12. Apakah cadangan anda di dalam memperbaiki kualiti perkhipidmatan prasekolah di Malaysia?
QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY (PARENTS)

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENT

1. What is your gender?
   - Male
   - Female

2. How old are you?
   - Less than 20 years
   - 20 to 29 years
   - 30 to 39 years
   - 40 to 49 years
   - 50 to 59 years
   - 60 years or greater

3. What is your race?
   - Malay
   - Chinese
   - Indian
   - Others (Please specify): ________________________________

4. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?
   - SPM
   - Certificate
   - Diploma
   - Degree
   - Masters
   - PhD

5. Which of the following categories best describes your primarily area of employment (regardless of your actual position)? Please specify your job: ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not working</th>
<th>Information technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>Legal services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment/Broadcasting</td>
<td>Religious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and Insurance</td>
<td>Retail/Small business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government and public admin</td>
<td>Telecommunication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health care and social assistance</th>
<th>Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hotel and food services</td>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. What is your household income per month?
   - Less than RM 500
   - RM 500 to RM 1500
   - RM 1500 to RM 3000
   - More than RM 3000

7. How many children do you have?
   - 1 to 3
   - 4 to 6
   - More than 6

8. Which of the following best describes the community in which this school is located?
   - Village/Suburban area
   - Town/Planned housing area
   - Metropolitan City

Why do you choose this preschool for your child?
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

SECTION 2: INFORMATION ON SERVICE QUALITY OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

Following are the elements in preschool that will be valued by people. Based on your perception, please rank the elements based on their level of importance when you evaluate the service of preschool education in Malaysia.

5=most important, 4=important, 3=neutral, 2=not important, 1=mostly not important

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. BASIC FACILITIES</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Premise with gates</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Having first aid kit</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cheerful premise and landscape</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Space of classroom</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Facilities for playing and learning</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Clean and safe kitchen</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Clean and attractive space for refreshment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Facilities for personal hygiene (e.g. toilet, sink)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Outdoor playing facilities (e.g. swing, slide, see-saw)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2. SCHOOL STAFF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Scale Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic qualification</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in early childhood education</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal appearance</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trained</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills and knowledge of teacher’s roles</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3. CURRICULUM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Scale Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Books and pictures</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of TV, video and/or computer</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of blocks/ building materials</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science materials that are suitable with student’s level of age</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics/ number</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group activities</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual activities (e.g. recitation of du’a)</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical instrument</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4. DAILY ROUTINES AND STUDENTS’ INTERACTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Scale Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greeting/ welcoming students and parents</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepared meals</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of toilet and sink</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health practices (e.g. washing hands)</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety practices</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication between students and teacher</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction among students</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5. PROGRAM STRUCTURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Scale Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily timetable/schedule</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free play</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group time</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group size</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisions for children with disabilities</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra activities after school time such as religious class or Quranic learning class</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6. SCHOOL RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS AND COMMUNITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Scale Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The frequency of parents getting information from school (newsletter, email, phone call)</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation on goals and objectives of preschool to parents and community</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendices

3. Report on development and achievement of students | 5 4 3 2 1
4. Face to face discussion between staff and parents | 5 4 3 2 1
5. Parents involvement in school activities | 5 4 3 2 1

5= most important, 4= important, 3=neutral, 2= not important, 1= mostly not important

### 7. VALUE OF THE SCHOOL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. School reputation</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. School fees</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cultural values brought into the school</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Religious/moral values brought into the school</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Number of students enrolled in the school</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Objectives of the school</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Surrounding of the school</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Relationship between school and community</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Proposition number of students per one teacher</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SECTION 3: INFORMATION ON THE MANAGEMENT OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

Following are the statement regarding the management of preschool education. Based on your perception, please circle the number which shows your level of agreement on the statement of the management of preschool towards improving the service quality of public preschool education in Malaysia.

5= strongly agree, 4= agree, 3= neutral, 2= disagree, 1= strongly disagree

#### 1. THE MANAGEMENT OF TECHNICAL ASPECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The record on students’ achievement and development is very important in developing the school’s educational goals.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The record on students’ achievement and development should be put into consideration in planning school curriculum.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A systematic school is a school which has yearly planning.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teachers’ teaching record should be checked by school head/ teacher leader periodically.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Observation of instruction in classroom can be used to evaluate the quality of teaching.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The development and adaptability of students in class have to be observed to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning activities.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 2. THE MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN ASPECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I believe teachers with higher academic qualification teach better in preschool.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Teaching experience can contribute to better quality of teaching.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The appearance of teachers is important in school.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. An ongoing professional development will support the quality of work among</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Salary received and support from school management influence the performance of teachers.

6. The involvement and ideas from parents are important in improving the quality of preschool.

7. I believe that a good relationship between the school management team and parents will lead to positive result if any problem arises.

8. The decisions made by school should include key actors from local community.

5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree

### 3. THE MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ASPECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Each preschool must have learning resources to encourage the reading interest of students.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Blocks and building materials are important to stimulate the students’ thinking skills.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Challenging science and mathematics activities are important to sharpen the student’s mind.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Group activities and working in team are important in developing positive behaviour of students.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Practicing du’a before class starts and before refreshment is one of the important elements in preschool education.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Activities using gross motor (e.g. jumping, running, climbing) are elements in evaluating development of students.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Activities using fine motor (e.g. coordinating hands for writing, tearing papers, building blocks) are elements in evaluating development of students.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4. THE MANAGEMENT OF SYMBOLIC ASPECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. School head/ teacher leader who always give inspirational motivation influences performance of teachers.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. School head/ teacher leader with charismatic (brave and risk-taking) leadership style can improve the school fast.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Teachers are motivated to work effectively if they are promised with rewards such as recognition or bonus.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The character of the school head and teachers reflects the ways they manage the school.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I believe if the school head/teacher leader works together with teachers, he/she will better understand the problems and needs of the teachers and students.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. School head/teacher leader who focuses on human relationship can lead to better performance of school.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5. THE MANAGEMENT OF CULTURAL ASPECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The culture brought by the school head/ teacher leader is significant to the school performance.</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Performance of teachers is depending to working culture of school.  
3. By giving authority to teachers to make decisions, they will be more motivated to work.  
4. Understanding the multi-religious and multiracial issues will increase the quality of the school management.  
5. The culture of one school can be understood by looking at the surrounding of the school and appearances of teachers and students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Performance of teachers is depending to working culture of school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. By giving authority to teachers to make decisions, they will be more</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Understanding the multi-religious and multiracial issues will increase the quality of the school management.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The culture of one school can be understood by looking at the sour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What can you suggest to government and this preschool in order to improve the preschool service quality?

Government:

__________________________________________________________________________  
__________________________________________________________________________  
__________________________________________________________________________

Preschool:

__________________________________________________________________________  
__________________________________________________________________________  
__________________________________________________________________________  
__________________________________________________________________________

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION
Assalamualaikum/Selamat sejahtera,
Saya, Farah Laili bt Muda @ Ismail, pelajar PhD dari RMIT Universiti, Australia, sedang menjalankan kajian berkenaan kualiti perkhidmatan dan pengurusan prasekolah di Malaysia. Saya ingin memohon jasa baik dan kerjasama pihak tuan/puan untuk mengisikan borang soal selidik ini. Terima kasih di atas perhatian dan kerjasama dari pihak tuan/puan.

**BAHAGIAN 1: LATAR BELAKANG RESPONDEN**

1. Jantina
   - Lelaki
   - Perempuan

2. Umur
   - Kurang dari 20 tahun
   - 20 hingga 29 tahun
   - 30 hingga 39 tahun
   - 40 hingga 49 tahun
   - 50 hingga 59 tahun
   - 60 tahun atau lebih

3. Bangsa
   - Melayu
   - Cina
   - India
   - Lain-lain (Sila nyatakan): __________________________________

4. Apakah tahap pendidikan formal tertinggi anda?
   - SPM
   - Sijil
   - Diploma
   - Ijazah
   - Masters
   - PhD

5. Di dalam bidang apakah anda bekerja sekarang? Sila nyatakan pekerjaan anda:
   - Tidak bekerja
   - Teknologi maklumat
   - Pencen
   - Perundangan
   - Pertanian
   - Pembuatan
Pendidikan | Pertahanan
---|---
Hiburan/Penyiaran | Agama
Kewangan dan insurans | Runcit/kerajaan kecil-kecilan
Pentadbiran awam/kerajaan | Telekomunikasi
Kesihatan dan khidmat social | Pengangkutan
Hotel dan katering | Lain-lain

6. Pendapatan seisi rumah sebulan
   - Kurang dari RM 500
   - RM 500 hingga RM 1500
   - RM 1500 hingga RM 3000
   - Lebih dari RM 3000

7. Bilangan anak
   - 1 hingga 3
   - 4 hingga 6
   - Lebih dari 6

8. Di manakah lokasi sekolah ini?
   - Luar Bandar/ kampung/pedalaman
   - Bandar/kawasan perumahan terancang
   - Kota metropolitan

Mengapakah anda memilih prasekolah ini untuk anak anda?

____________________________

____________________________

____________________________

**BAHAGIAN 2: KUALITI PERKHIDMATAN DI PRASEKOLAH**

Berikut adalah perkara-perkara yang diambil rona di dalam penilaian sesebuah prasekolah. Berdasarkan pandangan anda, sila tandakan perkara-perkara tersebut mengikut tahap kepentingan mereka di dalam menilai kualiti perkhidmatan prasekolah di Malaysia.

5=sangat penting, 4=penting, 3=neutral, 2=tidak penting, 1=sangat tidak penting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. KEMUDAHAN ASAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Premis berpagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Mempunyai peti kecemasan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Mempunyai premis dan lanskap yang melambangkan keceriaan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ruang belajar dan bermain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Alat kelengkapan untuk bermain dan belajar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Dapur yang bersih dan selamat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Ruang makan yang bersih dan menarik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Kemudahan kebersihan diri (cth: tandas, sinki)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Permainan luar (cth: buaian, gelongsor, jongkang-jongkit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5=sangat penting, 4=penting, 3=neutral, 2=tidak penting, 1=sangat tidak penting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. KAKITANGAN SEKOLAH</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Kelayakan akademik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Pengalaman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Minat di dalam pendidikan awal kanak-kanak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Penampilan diri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Terlatih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Kemahiran dan pengetahuan tentang peranan guru</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>3. KURIKULUM</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Buku dan gambar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Penggunaan TV, video, atau/dan komputer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Penggunaan Blok/ bahan binaan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bahan-bahan Sains yang sesuai dengan peringkat umur murid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Matematik/ kira-kira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Aktiviti bermasyarakat dan berkumpulan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Aktiviti kerohanian (cth: membaca doa, adab-adab makan, belajar)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Alat muzik</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>4. RUTIN HARIAN DAN INTERAKSI PELAJAR</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ucapan menyambut murid-murid dan ibubapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Makanan yang disediakan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Penggunaan tandas dan sinki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Amalan kesihatan (cth: membasuh tangan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Amalan keselamatan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Disiplin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Komunikasi di antara pelajar dan guru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Pergaulan sesama pelajar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>5. STRUKTUR PROGRAM</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Jadual harian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Bermain secara bebas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Aktiviti secara berkumpulan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Saiz kumpulan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Peruntukan untuk pelajar-pelajar kurang upaya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Aktiviti tambahan seperti kelas Fardu Ain dan mengaji Al-Quran</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 6. HUBUNGAN SEKOLAH DENGAN IBUBAPA DAN MASYARAKAT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Keterangan</th>
<th>Skor 1</th>
<th>Skor 2</th>
<th>Skor 3</th>
<th>Skor 4</th>
<th>Skor 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kekerapan ibubapa mendapat informasi dari sekolah (cth: bulletin, email, telefon)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Matlamat dan objektif prasekolah yang disampaikan kepada ibubapa dan masyarakat</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Makluman berkenaan perkembangan dan kemajuan murid</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Perjumpaan secara langsung antara guru dan ibubapa</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Penglibatan ibubapa di dalam aktiviti sekolah</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7. NILAI SEKOLAH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Keterangan</th>
<th>Skor 1</th>
<th>Skor 2</th>
<th>Skor 3</th>
<th>Skor 4</th>
<th>Skor 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Reputasi sekolah</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yuran sekolah</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nilai budaya yang diterap di sekolah</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Nilai agama/moral yang diterap di sekolah</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Jumlah pelajar di dalam sekolah</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Matlamat sekolah</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Persekitaran sekolah</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Hubungan di antara sekolah dan masyarakat</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Nisbah pelajar bagi seorang guru</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### BAHAGIAN 3: PENGURUSAN PENIDIKAN PRASEKOLAH

Berikut adalah pernyataan mengenai pengurusan pendidikan prasekolah. Sila tandakan tahap persetujuan anda ke atas pernyataan-pernyataan ini kepada pihak pengurusan prasekolah di dalam memperbaiki kualiti perkhidmatan pendidikan prasekolah di Malaysia.

5=sangat setuju, 4=setuju, 3=neutral, 2=tidak setuju, 1=sangat tidak setuju

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>PENGURUSAN ASPEK TEKNIKAL</th>
<th>Skor 1</th>
<th>Skor 2</th>
<th>Skor 3</th>
<th>Skor 4</th>
<th>Skor 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rekod pencapaian dan perkembangan murid sangat penting di dalam membentuk matlamat pendidikan sekolah.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rekod pencapaian dan perkembangan murid perlu diambil kira di dalam merancang kurikulum sekolah.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sekolah yang sistematik adalah sekolah yang mempunyai perancangan tahunan.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rekod mengajar guru-guru perlu disemak oleh guru besar/ ketua guru secara berkala.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pemantauan terhadap guru-guru di dalam kelas boleh digunakan untuk menilai kualiti pengajaran.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Perkembangan dan penerimaan pelajar di dalam kelas perlu dipantau untuk mengenalpasti keberkesanan aktiviti pengajaran dan pembelajaran.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 2. PENGERUSAN ASPEK KEMANUSIAAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Perkara</th>
<th>Skor 1</th>
<th>Skor 2</th>
<th>Skor 3</th>
<th>Skor 4</th>
<th>Skor 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Saya percaya guru-guru yang mempunyai kelayakan akademik yang tinggi selalunya mendidik murid-murid dengan lebih berkesan.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pengalaman mengajar menyumbang kepada kualiti pengajaran yang lebih baik</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Penampilan diri guru-guru adalah diutamakan di dalam sebesuah sekolah.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Peluang kerjaya professional yang diberikan secara berterusan akan mempengaruhi kualiti kerja guru-guru.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Gaji dan sokongan dari pihak sekolah yang diperolehi mempengaruhi prestasi kerja guru-guru.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Pengalaman mengajar menyumbang kepada kualiti pengajaran yang lebih baik</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Hubungan yang baik antara pihak pengurusan sekolah dan ibu bapa akan membawa kepada keputusan yang baik sekiranya sebarang masalah timbul.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Setiap keputusan yang dibuat di dalam sekolah perlu mengambil kira sensitiviti penduduk setempat.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3. PENGERUSAN ASPEK PENDIDIKAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Perkara</th>
<th>Skor 1</th>
<th>Skor 2</th>
<th>Skor 3</th>
<th>Skor 4</th>
<th>Skor 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pusat sumber perlu diwujudkan di setiap prasekolah bagi mewujudkan minat membaca.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Blok dan bahan binaan yang dapat merangsang minda murid-murid untuk berfikir mestilah mencukupi di setiap sekolah.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Aktiviti sains dan matematik mencabar yang bersesuaian dengan peringkat umur murid-murid perlu dijalankan di peringkat prasekolah.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Aktiviti bermasyarakat atau bekerja di dalam kumpulan penting dalam membentuk sikap yang positif pada murid-murid.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Melatih murid-murid membaca doa belajar, membaca doa makan dan beradab adalah salah satu elemen penting di dalam pendidikan prasekolah.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Aktiviti menggunakan kemahiran motor kasar (melompat, berlari dan memanjat) diambil kira di dalam penilaian seseorang murid.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Aktiviti menggunakan kemahiran yang merangsang penggunaan motor halus (memegang pensil, mengoyak kertas, memasang bongkah) diambil kira di dalam penilaian seseorang murid.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4. PENGERUSAN ASPEK SIMBOLIK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Perkara</th>
<th>Skor 1</th>
<th>Skor 2</th>
<th>Skor 3</th>
<th>Skor 4</th>
<th>Skor 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Guru besar/ ketua guru yang sentiasa memberi motivasi dapat mempengaruhi prestasi kerja guru-guru.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Guru besar/ ketua guru yang berkarakter (berani menghadapi risiko) dapat memperbaiki kualiti sekolah dengan cepat.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Guru-guru bermotivasi untuk bekerja dengan lebih efektif sekiranya mereka dijanjikan ganjaran seperti kenaikan pangkat atau bonus.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Karakter guru besar/ ketua guru mencerminkan cara mereka mengurus sekolah.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Guru besar/ ketua guru lebih memahami masalah dan keperluan guru dan murid-murid dengan mengamalkan sikap 'kerja bersama-sama guru'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 = sangat setuju, 4 = setuju, 3 = neutral, 2 = tidak setuju, 1 = sangat tidak setuju</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Budaya yang dibawa ke dalam sesebuah sekolah boleh mempengaruhi prestasi sekolah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Prestasi kerja guru-guru bergantung kepada budaya kerja di sekolah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Dengan memberi kuasa kepada guru-guru untuk membuat keputusan sendiri, mereka akan lebih bermotivasi untuk bekerja.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Memahami isu pelbagai agama dan bangsa akan meningkatkan kualiti pengurusan sekolah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Budaya sesebuah sekolah dapat difahami dengan melihat kepada persekitaran dan penampilan guru-guru serta murid-murid.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apakah cadangan anda kepada pihak kerajaan dan pihak sekolah untuk memperbaiki kualiti perkhidmatan di prasekolah?

Kerajaan:
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Prasekolah:
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

TERIMA KASIH DI ATAS KERJASAMA ANDA
# QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY (TEACHERS)

## SECTION 1: BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENT

1. What is your gender?
   - Male [ ]
   - Female [ ]

2. How old are you?
   - Less than 20 years [ ]
   - 20 to 29 years [ ]
   - 30 to 39 years [ ]
   - 40 to 49 years [ ]
   - 50 to 59 years [ ]
   - 60 years or greater [ ]

3. What is your race?
   - Malay [ ]
   - Chinese [ ]
   - Indian [ ]
   - Others (Please specify): ____________________________

4. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?
   - SPM [ ]
   - Certificate [ ]
   - Diploma [ ]
   - Degree [ ]
   - Masters [ ]
   - PhD [ ]

5. How many years experience do you have working in preschool education area?
   - Less than 1 year [ ]
   - 1-5 years [ ]
   - 6-10 years [ ]
   - 11-15 years [ ]
   - 16-20 years [ ]
   - More than 20 years [ ]

6. What is your current employment status?
   - Permanent [ ]
   - Part-time [ ]
Temporary
Others (Please specify): ___________________________

From the aspect of management, what are your suggestions in improving the service quality in preschool education?
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

SECTION 2: INFORMATION ON SCHOOL BACKGROUND

1. Which of the following best describes the community in which this school is located?
   Village [ ]
   Town [ ]
   City [ ]

2. What is the current school enrolment?
   Please write a number.
   ______ students

3. How much consideration is given to the following factors when students are considered for admission to this school?
   Please mark one choice in each row.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not Considered</th>
<th>Considered</th>
<th>High Priority</th>
<th>Prerequisite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Residence in a particular area</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Parents endorsement of the religious/moral approaches philosophy of the school</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Students’ need or desire for a special programme</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Attendance of other family members at the school (past or present)</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Household income of family</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Others (Please specify)</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________


## SECTION 3: INFORMATION ON SERVICE QUALITY OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

Following are the elements in preschool that will be valued by people. Based on your perception, please rank the elements based on their level of importance when you evaluate the service of preschool education in Malaysia.

5=most important, 4=important, 3=neutral, 2=not important, 1=mostly not important

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. BASIC FACILITIES</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Premise with gates</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Having first aid kit</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cheerful premise and landscape</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Space of classroom</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Facilities for playing and learning</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Clean and safe kitchen</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Clean and attractive space for refreshment</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Facilities for personal hygiene (e.g. toilet, sink)</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Outdoor playing facilities (e.g. swing, slide, see-saw)</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. SCHOOL STAFF</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Academic qualification</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Experience</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Interest in early childhood education</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Personal appearance</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Trained</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Skills and knowledge of teacher’s roles</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. CURRICULUM</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Books and pictures</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Use of TV, video and/or computer</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Use of blocks/ building materials</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Science materials that are suitable with student’s level of age</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Mathematics/ number</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Group activities</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Spiritual activities (e.g. recitation of du’a)</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Musical instrument</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. DAILY ROUTINES AND STUDENTS’ INTERACTION</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Greeting/ welcoming students and parents</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Prepared meals</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Use of toilet and sink</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Health practices (e.g. washing hands)</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Safety practices</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Discipline</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Communication between students and teacher</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 8. Interaction among students

5 = most important, 4 = important, 3 = neutral, 2 = not important, 1 = mostly not important

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8. Interaction among students</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
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</thead>
</table>

### 5. PROGRAM STRUCTURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. PROGRAM STRUCTURE</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Daily timetable/schedule</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Free play</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Group time</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Group size</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Provisions for children with disabilities</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Extra activities after school time such as religious class or Quranic learning class</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6. SCHOOL RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS AND COMMUNITY

5 = most important, 4 = important, 3 = neutral, 2 = not important, 1 = mostly not important

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. SCHOOL RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS AND COMMUNITY</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The frequency of parents getting information from school (newsletter, email, phone call)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Explanation on goals and objectives of preschool to parents and community</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Report on development and achievement of students</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Face to face discussion between staff and parents</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Parents involvement in school activities</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7. VALUE OF THE SCHOOL

5 = most important, 4 = important, 3 = neutral, 2 = not important, 1 = mostly not important

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. VALUE OF THE SCHOOL</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. School reputation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. School fees</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cultural values brought into the school</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Religious/moral values brought into the school</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Number of students enrolled in the school</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Objectives of the school</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Surrounding of the school</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Relationship between school and community</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Proposition number of students per one teacher</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SECTION 4: INFORMATION ON THE MANAGEMENT OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

Following are the statement regarding the management of preschool education. Based on your perception, please circle the number which shows your level of agreement on the statement of the management of preschool towards improving the service quality of public preschool education in Malaysia.

5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. THE MANAGEMENT OF TECHNICAL ASPECTS</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The record on students’ achievement and development is very important in developing the school’s educational goals.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. The record on students’ achievement and development should be put into consideration in planning school curriculum. 5 4 3 2 1
3. A systematic school is a school which has yearly planning. 5 4 3 2 1
4. Teachers’ teaching record should be checked by school head/ teacher leader periodically. 5 4 3 2 1
5. Observation of instruction in classroom can be used to evaluate the quality of teaching. 5 4 3 2 1
6. The development and adaptability of students in class have to be observed to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning activities. 5 4 3 2 1

5= strongly agree, 4= agree, 3=neutral, 2= disagree, 1= strongly disagree

### 2. THE MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN ASPECTS

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I believe teachers with higher academic qualification teach better in preschool.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Teaching experience can contribute to better quality of teaching.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The appearance of teachers is important in school.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>An ongoing professional development will support the quality of work among preschool teacher.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Salary received and support from school management influence the performance of teachers.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>The involvement and ideas from parents are important in improving the quality of preschool.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I believe that a good relationship between the school management team and parents will lead to positive result if any problem arises.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>The decisions made by school should include key actors from local community.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3. THE MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ASPECTS

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Each preschool must have learning resources to encourage the reading interest of students.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Blocks and building materials are important to stimulate the students’ thinking skills.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Challenging science and mathematics activities are important to sharpen the student’s mind.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Group activities and working in team are important in developing positive behaviour of students.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Practicing du’a before class starts and before refreshment is one of the important elements in preschool education.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Activities using gross motor (e.g. jumping, running, climbing) are elements in evaluating development of students.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Activities using fine motor (e.g. coordinating hands for writing, tearing papers, building blocks) are elements in evaluating development of students.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4. THE MANAGEMENT OF SYMBOLIC ASPECTS

<p>| | | | | |</p>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>School head/ teacher leader who always give inspirational motivation influences</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
performance of teachers.

2. School head/ teacher leader with charismatic (brave and risk-taking) leadership style can improve the school fast.  

3. Teachers are motivated to work effectively if they are promised with rewards such as recognition or bonus.  

4. The character of the school head and teachers reflects the ways they manage the school.  

5. I believe if the school head/teacher leader works together with teachers, he/she will better understand the problems and needs of the teachers and students.  

6. School head/ teacher leader who focuses on human relationship can lead to better performance of school.

5= strongly agree, 4= agree, 3=neutral, 2= disagree, 1= strongly disagree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. THE MANAGEMENT OF CULTURAL ASPECTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. The culture brought by the school head/ teacher leader is significant to the school performance. | 5 4 3 2 1  
| 2. Performance of teachers is depending to working culture of school. | 5 4 3 2 1  
| 3. By giving authority to teachers to make decisions, they will be more motivated to work. | 5 4 3 2 1  
| 4. Understanding the multi-religious and multiracial issues will increase the quality of the school management. | 5 4 3 2 1  
| 5. The culture of one school can be understood by looking at the surrounding of the school and appearances of teachers and students. | 5 4 3 2 1  

What can you suggest to government and this preschool in order to improve the preschool service quality?

**Government:**

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

**Preschool:**

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION
Assalamualaikum/Selamat sejahtera,

Saya, Farah Laili bt Muda @ Ismail, pelajar PhD dari RMIT University, Australia, sedang menjalankan kajian berkenaan kualiti perkhidmatan dan pengurusan prasekolah di Malaysia. Saya ingin memohon jasa baik dan kerjasama pihak tuan/puan untuk mengisikan borang soal selidik ini. Terima kasih di atas perhatian dan kerjasama dari pihak tuan/puan.

**BAHAGIAN 1: LATAR BELAKANG RESPONDEN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Jantina</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lelaki</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perempuan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Umur</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kurang dari 20 tahun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 hingga 29 tahun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 hingga 39 tahun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 hingga 49 tahun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 hingga 59 tahun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 tahun atau lebih</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>3. Bangsa</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Melayu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cina</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lain-lain (Sila nyatakan):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. Apakah tahap pendidikan formal tertinggi anda?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sijil</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ijazah</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. Sudah berapa tahun anda bekerja di dalam sektor pendidikan prasekolah?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kurang dari satu tahun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5 tahun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 tahun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 tahun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20 tahun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebih dari 20 tahun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Apakah status pekerjaan anda sekarang?
   Tetap  
   Separuh masa  
   Sementara  
   Lain-lain (Sila nyatakan): ______________________________

Dari segi aspek pengurusan, apakah cadangan anda bagi memperbaiki kualiti perkhidmatan di prasekolah?
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

**BAHAGIAN 2: LATAR BELAKANG SEKOLAH**

1. Di manakah lokasi sekolah ini?
   Luar Bandar/ kampung/ pedalaman  
   Bandar/ kawasan perumahan terancang  
   Kota metropolitan

2. Berapakah jumlah pelajar sekolah ini?
   *Sila tuliskan nombor.*
   ______ pelajar

3. Apakah faktor-faktor yang diambil kira dalam pengambilan pelajar?
   *Sila tandakan 1 kotak di setiap baris.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tidak Diambil kira</th>
<th>Diambil kira</th>
<th>Sangat Diambil kira</th>
<th>Prasyarat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>g) Penduduk di sebesuh kawasan.................</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h) Penerimaan ibubapa terhadap cara pengajaran dan pendekatan agama/moral di sekolah...............</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) Keperluan program khas untuk pelajar-pelajar........</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j) Ahli keluarga yang bersekolah di tempat yang sama (sekarang atau telah tamat)........................</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.................</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k) Pendapatan seisi rumah keluarga pelajar...............................................</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.................</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l) Lain-lain (sila nyatakan):</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### BAHAGIAN 3: KUALITI PERKHIDMATAN DI PRASEKOLAH

Berikut adalah elemen-elemen yang diambil kira di dalam penilaian sesebuah prasekolah. Berdasarkan pandangan anda, sila tandakan nombor di bawah mengikut tahap kepentingan elemen-elemen tersebut di dalam menilai kualiti perkhidmatan prasekolah di Malaysia.

5=sangat penting, 4=penting, 3=neutral, 2=tidak penting, 1=sangat tidak penting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. KEMUDAHAN ASAS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Premis berpagar</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Mempunyai premis dan lanskap yang melambangkan keceriaan</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Mempunyai peti kecemasan</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ruang belajar dan bermain</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Alat kelengkapan untuk bermain dan belajar</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Dapur yang bersih dan selamat</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Ruang makan yang bersih dan menarik</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Kemudahan kebersihan diri (cth: tandas, sinki)</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Permainan luar (cth: buaian, gelongsor, jongkang-jongkit)</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. KAKITANGAN SEKOLAH</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Kelayakan akademik</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Pengalaman</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Minat di dalam pendidikan awal kanak-kanak</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Penampilan diri</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Terlatih</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Kemahiran dan pengetahuan tentang peranan guru</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. KURIKULUM</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Buku dan gambar</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Penggunaan TV, video, atau/dan komputer</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Penggunaan Blok/ bahan binaan</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bahan-bahan Sains yang sesuai dengan peringkat umur murid</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Matematik/ kira-kira</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Aktiviti bermasyarakat dan berkumpulan</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Aktiviti kerohanian (cth: membaca doa, adab-adab makan, belajar)</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Alat muzik</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. RUTIN HARIAN DAN INTERAKSI PELAJAR</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ucapan menyambut murid-murid dan ibubapa</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Makanan yang disediakan</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Penggunaan tandas dan sinki</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Amalan kesihatan (cth: membasuh tangan)</td>
<td>5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Amalan keselamatan
6. Disiplin
7. Komunikasi di antara pelajar dan guru
8. Pergaulan sesama pelajar

| 5 = sangat penting, 4 = penting, 3 = neutral, 2 = tidak penting, 1 = sangat tidak penting |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5. STRUKTUR PROGRAM            | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 1. Jadual harian               | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. Bermain secara bebas        | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. Aktiviti secara berkumpulan | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. Saiz kumpulan               | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. Peruntukan untuk pelajar-pelajar kurang upaya | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. Aktiviti tambahan seperti kelas Fardu Ain dan mengaji Al-Quran | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

| 6. HUBUNGAN SEkolah DENGAN IBUPAPA DAN MASYARAKAT | 5 = sangat penting, 4 = penting, 3 = neutral, 2 = tidak penting, 1 = sangat tidak penting |
|---------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Kekerapan ibubapa mendapat informasi dari sekolah (cth: bulatan, email, telefon) | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. Matlamat dan objektif prasekolah yang disampaikan kepada ibubapa dan masyarakat | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. Makluman berkenaan perkembangan dan kemajuan murid | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. Perjumpaan secara langsung antara guru dan ibubapa | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. Penglibatan ibubapa di dalam aktiviti sekolah | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

| 7. NILAI SEKolah | 5 = sangat penting, 4 = penting, 3 = neutral, 2 = tidak penting, 1 = sangat tidak penting |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Reputasi sekolah | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. Yuran sekolah | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. Nilai budaya yang diterap di sekolah | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. Nilai agama/moral yang diterap di sekolah | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. Jumlah pelajar di dalam sekolah | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. Matlamat sekolah | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. Persekitaran sekolah | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. Hubungan di antara sekolah dan masyarakat | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. Nisbah pelajar bagi seorang guru | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

**BAHAGIAN 4: PENGURUSAN PENDIDIKAN PRASEKOLAH**

Berikut adalah pernyataan mengenai pengurusan pendidikan prasekolah. Sila tandakan tahap persetujuan anda ke atas pernyataan-pernyataan ini kepada pihak pengurusan prasekolah di dalam memperbaiki dan meningkatkan kualiti perkhidmatan pendidikan prasekolah di Malaysia.

5 = sangat setuju, 4 = setuju, 3 = neutral, 2 = tidak setuju, 1 = sangat tidak setuju

| 4. PENGURUSAN ASPEK TEKNIKAL | 5 = sangat setuju, 4 = setuju, 3 = neutral, 2 = tidak setuju, 1 = sangat tidak setuju |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Rekod pencapaian dan perkembangan murid sangat penting di dalam membentuk matlamat pendidikan sekolah. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
2. Rekod pencapaian dan perkembangan murid perlu diambil kira di dalam merancang kurikulum sekolah.

3. Sekolah yang sistematik adalah sekolah yang mempunyai perancangan tahunan.

4. Rekod mengajar guru-guru perlu disemak oleh guru besar/ ketua guru secara berkala.

5. Pemantauan terhadap guru-guru di dalam kelas boleh digunakan untuk menilai kualiti pengajaran.


5=sangat setuju, 4=setuju, 3=neutral, 2=tidak setuju, 1=sangat tidak setuju

2. PENGURUSAN ASPEK KEMANUSIAAN

1. Guru-guru yang mempunyai kelayakan akademik yang tinggi selalunya mendidik murid-murid dengan lebih berkesan.

2. Pengalaman mengajar menyumbang kepada kualiti pengajaran yang lebih baik.

3. Penampilan diri guru-guru adalah diutamakan di dalam sesebuah sekolah.

4. Peluang kerjaya profesional yang diberikan secara berterusan akan mempengaruhi kualiti kerja guru-guru.

5. Gaji dan sokongan dari pihak sekolah yang diperolehi mempengaruhi prestasi kerja guru-guru.

6. Penyertaan ibubapa di dalam aktiviti sekolah adalah penting untuk meningkatkan kualiti perkhidmatan sekolah.

7. Hubungan yang baik antara pihak pengurusan sekolah dan ibu bapa akan membawa kepada keputusan yang baik sekiranya sebarang masalah timbul.

8. Setiap keputusan yang dibuat di dalam sekolah perlu mengambil kira sensitiviti penduduk setempat.

5=sangat setuju, 4=setuju, 3=neutral, 2=tidak setuju, 1=sangat tidak setuju

3. PENGURUSAN ASPEK PENDIDIKAN

1. Pusat sumber perlu diwujudkan di setiap prasekolah bagi mewujudkan minat membaca.

2. Blok dan bahan binaan yang dapat merangsang mina murid-murid untuk berfikir mestilah mencukupi di setiap sekolah.

3. Aktiviti sains dan matematik mencabar yang bersesuaian dengan peringkat umur murid-murid perlu dijalankan di peringkat prasekolah.

4. Aktiviti bernasyararaka atau bekerja di dalam kumpulan penting dalam membentuk sikap yang positif pada murid-murid.

5. Melatih murid-murid membaca doa belajar, membaca doa makan dan beradab adalah salah satu elemen penting di dalam pendidikan prasekolah.

6. Aktiviti menggunakan kemahiran motor kasar (melompat, berlari dan memanjat) diambil kira di dalam penilaian seseorang murid.

7. Aktiviti menggunakan kemahiran yang merangsang penggunaan motor halus (memegang pensil, mengoyak kertas, memasang bongkah) diambil kira di dalam penilaian seseorang murid.
### 4. PENGURUSAN ASPEK SIMBOLIK

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Guru besar/ ketua guru yang sentiasa memberi motivasi dapat mempengaruhi prestasi kerja guru-guru.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Guru besar/ketua guru yang berkarisma (berani menghadapi risiko) dapat memperbaiki kualiti sekolah dengan cepat.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Guru-guru bermotivasi untuk bekerja dengan lebih efektif sekiranya mereka dijanjikan ganjaran seperti kenaikan pangkat atau bonus.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Karakter guru besar/ ketua guru mencerminkan cara mereka mengurus sekolah.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Guru besar/ ketua guru lebih memahami masalah dan keperluan guru dan murid-murid dengan mengamalkan sikap ‘kerja bersama-sama guru’.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Guru besar/ ketua guru yang mementingkan hubungan sesama manusia akan membawa kepada prestasi sekolah yang baik.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### 5. PENGURUSAN ASPEK BUDAYA

<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Budaya yang dibawa ke dalam sesebuah sekolah boleh mempengaruhi prestasi sekolah.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Prestasi kerja guru-guru bergantung kepada budaya kerja di sekolah.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Dengan memberi kuasa kepada guru-guru untuk membuat keputusan sendiri, mereka akan lebih bermotivasi untuk bekerja.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Memahami isu pelbagai agama dan bangsa akan meningkatkan kualiti pengurusan sekolah.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Budaya sesebuah sekolah dapat difahami dengan melihat kepada persekitaran dan penampilan guru-guru serta murid-murid.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apakah cadangan anda kepada pihak kerajaan dan pihak sekolah untuk memperbaiki kualiti perkhidmatan di prasekolah?

**Kerajaan:**

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Prasekolah:

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

**TERIMA KASIH DI ATAS KERJASAMA ANDA**