

**STUDENT TEACHERS' CONCEPTION OF FEEDBACK
WITHIN AN ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:
LINK TO PUPIL ASPIRATION**

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Abstract: Teacher beliefs or conceptualisations of feedback should facilitate pupil development. However, to what extent does the conception of feedback in assessment for learning influence pupil aspirations as commanded by the Malaysian Education Development Plan? Thus, this study is conducted to explore the degree of influence of the conceptions of feedback factors on Pupil Aspiration. A survey research design is used in this study using a self-report inventory on feedback conceptions and pupil aspirations. The participants involved are 490 student teachers who have completed their teaching practical in the government schools in their previous semester. The feedback conception inventory adapted from the Teacher Conceptions of Feedback (TCoF) is used to measure the conception of feedback and the instrument for Pupil Aspiration is developed by the researchers. A structural equation modelling software, the Analysis of Moment Structures was used to test the hypothesized relationship. The analysis involves two-stage approach. Results of the study indicated that the proposed model was supported, and thus revealing that feedback conceptions was associated with Pupil Aspirations. Ten inter-correlated constructs had good psychometric properties. All the nine constructs of feedback conceptions loaded positively on pupil aspirations. The findings will give rise to further hypotheses which could close the gap of the research.

Keywords: *feedback conceptions, pupil aspirations, assessment for learning, self-regulation, peer-feedback*

**KONSEPSI UMPAN BALIK GURU SISWA DALAM PENTAKSIRAN
UNTUK PEMBELAJARAN PENGAJIAN LINGKUNGAN BELAJAR:
PENGARUH TERHADAP ASPIRASI MURID**

Abstrak: Keyakinan guru atau konseptualisasi umpan balik haruslah dapat memfasilitasi perkembangan murid. Namun, sejauh mana konsepsi umpan balik dalam pentaksiran untuk pembelajaran dapat mempengaruhi Aspirasi Murid seperti yang disarankan oleh Rencana Pengembangan Pendidikan Malaysia? Dengan demikian, penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengeksplorasi tingkat pengaruh konsepsi faktor umpan balik terhadap Aspirasi Murid. Desain penelitian survei dalam penelitian ini menggunakan inventaris laporan diri pada konsep umpan balik dan Aspirasi Murid. Peserta yang terlibat adalah 490 guru siswa yang telah menyelesaikan praktik mengajar mereka di sekolah-sekolah pemerintah pada semester sebelumnya. Persediaan konsepsi umpan balik yang diadaptasi dari Teacher Conceptions of Feedback (TCoF) digunakan untuk mengukur konsepsi umpan balik, dan instrumen untuk Aspirasi Murid dibina oleh pengkaji sendiri. Sebuah perangkat lunak pemodelan persamaan struktural, Analisis Struktur Momen digunakan untuk menguji hubungan hipotesis. Analisis ini melibatkan pendekatan dua tahap. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa model yang diusulkan didukung, dan dengan demikian mengungkapkan bahwa konsepsi umpan balik dikaitkan dengan Aspirasi Murid. Sepuluh konstruksi yang saling berkorelasi memiliki sifat psikometrik yang baik. Kesembilan konsep umpan balik memuat secara positif terhadap Aspirasi Murid. Temuan ini akan membina hipotesis lain yang dapat menutup kesenjangan penyelidikan.

Kata Kunci: *konsep umpan balik, Aspirasi Murid, pentaksiran untuk pembelajaran, pengawalseliaan diri, umpan balik rakan-sebaya*

INTRODUCTION

Assessment for learning is a form of assessment which could improve students' performance if properly implemented (Suzana & Jamil, 2012). And, feedback is the key component of assessment for learning. By definition, feedback is informations such as knowledge, skills or attitudes provided by teachers, peers, books, parents, self or experiences regarding one's performance (Hattie & Timperly, 2007). In short, feedback is known as '*a consequence of performance*'. Information could be in the form of a corrective ones, an alternative strategy, a clarifying idea or encouraging ideas. In general, the conceptualisations of teaching or learning could influence practises and outcomes (Richardson, 1996). This is supported by Kulhavy & Stock (1989) who believe that teachers' conceptions of feedback could influence the implementation of assessment for learning during teaching and learning process which in turn could influence students' performance.

It is important to understand about the conceptions of feedback from the teachers' perspective within the context of the Malaysian educational system. The formal implementation of Classroom Assessment at the end of 2016 has initiated change. The classroom assessment, which consists of assessment for learning and assessment of learning are supposed to be implemented in classrooms to improve students' learning (KPM, 2018). And, the most important component in assessment for learning is feedback (Black & Wiliam, 2009). Teachers are expected to assess during teaching and learning process i.e. assessment is integrated into the teaching and learning process. Hence, feedback provided to students are meant to improve students' learning and also to enable teachers to modify their teaching strategies. As for example, teachers could do questioning techniques to determine knowledge, skills and values of students. The information gained could be used to help them with their practical teaching or to modify their lesson plan for the next class. Some of the suggested assessment techniques are peer-assessment and self-assessment. Both techniques are very powerful in improving knowledge and skills. Feedback used during self-assessment could make students to create learning by reflecting upon their own learning (Black & Wiliam, 2009). In addition, feedback

during peer-assessment produces an internalize force in themselves regarding learning intentions and success criteria in the context of their peers work, which has more powerful effect on them.

This study regarding the influence of feedback conceptions on Pupil Aspirations is using the CIPP Model by Daniel Stufflebeam as its theoretical framework. According to Stufflebeam (2003), a process dimension which involves 'implementing decision' could influence a product dimension which involve 'recycling decisions'. A process dimension includes any information gained during the implementation of any activity or a complete description of any activity, whereas a product dimension includes any information on the outcome of any activity or program (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007). In the context of this study, a process dimension is 'feedback conceptions' and a product dimension is 'pupil aspiration'. The framework of this study uses this model and hypothesizes that feedback conceptions do influence Pupil Aspiration.

Feedback is a powerful strategy used by teachers from various level of study and subject matter in improving learning (Leahy, Lyon, Thompson, & Wiliam, 2005). However, there is a relatively limited body of research relating to teacher conceptions of feedback. Some teachers feel that feedback could be in the form of spoken or written comments about learning, spoken or written comments about behaviour or grades or marks (Irving, Harris, & Peterson, 2011). Furthermore, Wiliam (2011) believes that the kind of feedback provided to students do influence their learning. Giving mark or grade only is considered a weak feedback, whereas giving information on correct answers together with some explanations or activities for improvement are considered as a very powerful feedback. If we were to compare between giving marks, giving comments only or giving marks together with comments, the research has found that the second one is the most powerful way of giving feedback (Black, 2007). This is because when students are given only comments, it allows them to improve their belief system and hence, helps them to improve their work. However, comments like '*quite a good job*' does not really helps in improving students' learning as students do not get a clear and exact picture on how to improve their work (Leahy et al., 2005).

Some teachers believe that feedback could be used to realign their teaching strategies and teaching materials during teaching and learning process following the stated learning objectives (Young & Giebelhaus, 2005). In addition, feedback could also be used to provide information on students' weaknesses and then, to try to get a better way to correct their misconception. Feedback can also be used for school report or to encourage students by means of praise. All of these are to improve students' learning. However, there also the negative sides of feedback. There are cases whereby feedback demotivates students as they do not understand the feedback provided (Rust, 2002). Even, some students feel more stressful after getting feedback from teachers. Theoretically, in practising a good feedback, a teacher has to make sure that a feedback is helping the students to realize their goals in learning and also the gap that exist between the current performance and the desired goal (Nicol & MacFarlene,-Dick, 2006). A feedback has to be clear and exact. It should be written in a descriptive phase and not too generalized or an assumed interpretations (Hamid & Mahmood, 2010). Furthermore, a good feedback allows students to develop their

self-esteem and also makes them feel good about themselves.

There is a model of feedback which could be referred to in supporting this study. This feedback model shows how the implementation of an effective feedback could improve students' learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Feedback is meant to reduce the gap between current understandings of students with the desired ones (Young & Giebenhaus, 2005). These could be achieved by three main operations which are 'feed up' trying to answer '*Where am I going?*', 'feed-back' ('*How am I going?*') or 'feed forward' ('*Where to next?*'). These three operations would work at four different levels. The feedback at the first three levels (task, process and self-regulation levels) is interrelated whereas those at the fourth level (self or personal level) are rarely effective.

In the Malaysian educational context following Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015-2025, students should be equipped with six main components which are knowledge, thinking skills, leadership skills, bilingual proficiency, ethics and spirituality and national identity. All components are in line with the vision stated by the Malaysian Educational Philosophy

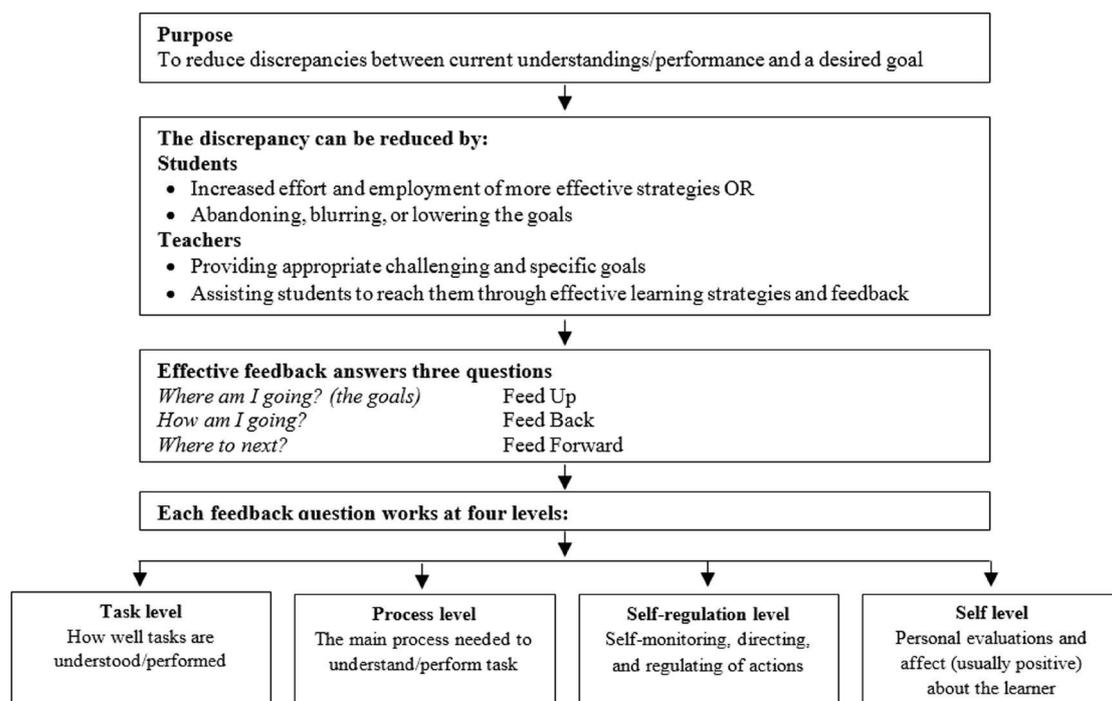


Figure 1. A Feedback Model

which was written in 1988 (MOE, 2013). Thus, we conclude that a solid combination of knowledge, thinking skills, leadership skills, bilingual proficiency, ethics and spirituality and national identity in every pupil in every school in every state is needed to ensure that they can keep pace in an increasingly competitive global economy and also to enable them to contribute meaningfully to their families and society. First, in knowledge component, pupils must be good in literacy and numeracy skills. Second is their thinking skills especially the higher-order thinking skills to ensure that they are able to think creatively and able to innovate better, and also able to analyse critically and logically. Third is looking at the capability of pupil in leadership skills such as entrepreneurship, resilience, emotional intelligence and strong communication skills. Next, each student has to be proficient in languages, Malay and English language. Ethics and spirituality are focusing in improving spirituality values, integrity and civic responsibility such as act good towards nation and caring towards society and the environment. In this study, there are 25 items developed for the six constructs to assess pupil aspirations, and it is developed by the researcher following the characteristics listed by the blueprint.

This study is important as it integrates several variables on teachers' conceptions of feedback which can influence pupil aspirations. There are few studies discussing on the feedback implementation in the Malaysian education system. However, there was no evidence available on how teachers' conceptions of feedback might interact with pupil aspirations, a matter investigated in this study. There is a research on teacher practises in providing feedback but that is for geography subject only and their concern is for practises only (Suzana & Jamil, 2011). All the hypothesized are developed following the CIPP Model whereby it states that any process dimension (feedback conception) influences product dimension (Pupil Aspiration).

The purpose of this study was to explore the degree of influence of the conceptions of feedback factors have on Pupil Aspiration. Specifically, the focus is twofold: a) to investigate whether Conception-Irrelevance (Student Ignore), Conception-Improvement (Student Use), Conception-Accountability (Expected), Conception-Encouragement + Self

Type (Praise), Task Type (Task), Process Type (Process), Self-Regulation Type (SR), Peer & Self-Assessment (PASA) and Timeliness (Prompt) are significantly related to Pupil Aspiration; and b) to develop a structural equation model to explain the interrelationship among the study variables. It was hypothesized that;

- i) H_{1a} : Teacher's perceptions of Conception - irrelevance (Student Ignore) positively influence Pupil Aspiration
- ii) H_{1b} : Teacher's perceptions of Conception - improvement (Student Use) positively influence Pupil Aspiration
- iii) H_{1c} : Teacher's perceptions of Conception - Accountability (Expected) positively influence Pupil Aspiration
- iv) H_{1d} : Teacher's perceptions of Peer and Self-Assessment (PASA) positively influence Pupil Aspiration
- v) H_{1e} : Teacher's perceptions of Conception - Encouragement + Self Type (Praise) positively influence Pupil Aspiration
- vi) H_{1f} : Teacher's perceptions of Process Type (Process) positively influence Pupil Aspiration
- vii) H_{1g} : Teacher's perceptions of Self-Regulation Type (SR) positively influence Pupil Aspiration
- viii) H_{1h} : Teacher's perceptions of Task Type (Task) positively influence Pupil Aspiration
- ix) H_{1i} : Teacher's perceptions of Timeliness (Prompt) positively influence Pupil Aspiration

METHODS

This study is both cross-sectional and survey in nature. It is a survey research design as the student teachers were surveyed on key variables of feedback conceptions and their Pupil Aspiration. Further, a post hoc correlation design was used as a framework for data analysis in the study. Thus, relationships among the variables were explored (rather than manipulated). This is conducted in order to develop a model which shows the interrelationships of all the key variables in this study. The target population of the study is the undergraduate students who are currently taking a subject named 'Teaching Reflection Seminar' in their final semester. All of the students have completed their teaching practical in the government schools

all over Malaysia in the previous semester. The participants of this study are 490 student teachers which are chosen randomly from the population. The students come from a mixture of courses (psychology education, early childhood education, special education, sports education, arts education, etc). The student teachers were randomly selected from the population.

Both instruments (Feedback Conceptions and Pupil Aspirations) were piloted to check for their validity and reliability using the Rasch Measurement Model. This study utilized the feedback conception instrument, which was adapted from 'TCoF inventory' (Harris & Brown, 2008) [with permission]. The total number of items for both instruments is 62 items. TCoF consists of 37 items from 9 subscales [(Conception-Irrelevance (Students Ignore) – 4 items, Conception-Improvement (Student Use) – 4 items, Conception-Accountability (Expected) – 3 items, Conception-Encouragement + Self Type (Praise) – 6 items, Task Type (Task) – 3 items, Process Type (Process) – 4 items, Self-Regulation Type (SR) – 5 items, Peer & Self-Assessment (PASA) – 3 items and Timeliness (Prompt) – 5 items)]. The scales are measured using a 6-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Past studies have shown that this instrument has been validated by various studies in several countries. However, it is not validated yet in the Malaysian context.

Pupil Aspiration is measured using an instrument developed by the researcher. It consists of 25 items from 6 subscales [(Knowledge – 4 items, Thinking skills – 4 items, Leadership skills – 4 items, bilingual proficiency – 3 items, ethics and spirituality – 6 items and

national identity – 4 items)]. The scales are measured using a 6-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. When developing the items, the researcher refers to six Pupil Aspirations mentioned in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 (MOE, 2013). One of the objectives from the blueprint is to establish a clear vision and aspirations for individual students from the year 2013 to 2025. To improve pupil aspirations is to improve knowledge, thinking skills, leadership skills, bilingual proficiency, ethics and spirituality and national identity of each and every student which will later prepare to transform the Malaysian education system.

The software used for the analysis is called Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS) software. The fit indices used are shown in Table 1.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Profile of Respondents

There are 73% female (n=358) and 27% male (n=132) involved. Most of them are Malays (85%) and others are Chinese and Indians. According to type of schools, it is similar with 55% are from urban schools and 45% are from rural schools. Most of the students gain an 'a' or a-' for their teaching practical mark with only 25% gain a b+.

The Measurement Model

In this study, a two-stage approach is used to test hypothesis (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). The first stage is to assess the measurement model and the second stage is the analysis of a

Table 1. Goodness-of-fit Indices

Goodness-of-fit Index	Acceptable Value	Comments
Chi-square (X^2)	$p > .05$ (non-significant)	Indicates exact fit of the model. Value is sensitive to large sample size
Normed chi-square (X^2/df)	[2.00, 5.00]	This is to reduce the sensitivity of X^2 to sample size $X^2/df < 3.0$: good fit
The Goodness-of-Fit Index(GFI)	[.00, 1.00]	GFI = 1.00: perfect fit GFI > .9: good fit
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	RMSEA \leq .08	RMSEA < .05: good fit RMSEA .05 - .08: adequate fit Values up to .10: poor fit
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	CFI \geq .90	.00 > CFI > 1.00 for acceptance

structural equation model. This is to avoid bad measures as measurement models are validated first before we proceed with the full structural model and also to avoid an interaction between both models (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). Before going through the process of analysing the structural equation model, the correlation between all the ten constructs were conducted. All the correlation values were less than .85 so testing hypothesis could proceed. According to Kline (2005), if we were to avoid multi-collinearity problem then the correlation between constructs of the study has to be not more than .85.

Test of Hypotheses and the Structural Equation Model

When hypothesis were to be tested, a structural model was assembled from the measurement models. Few items have been deleted from the measurement model after going through validity and reliability process due to low factor loadings. According to Byrne (2010), a structural model could be formed following the theoretical interrelationships among the constructs. As for this study, following the CIPP Model, it was hypothesized that all the constructs in the process dimension was positively related to product dimension. The Maximum Likelihood Method is applied to test whether the model has reached the significant level or not. Figure 2 shows the hypothesized structural model.

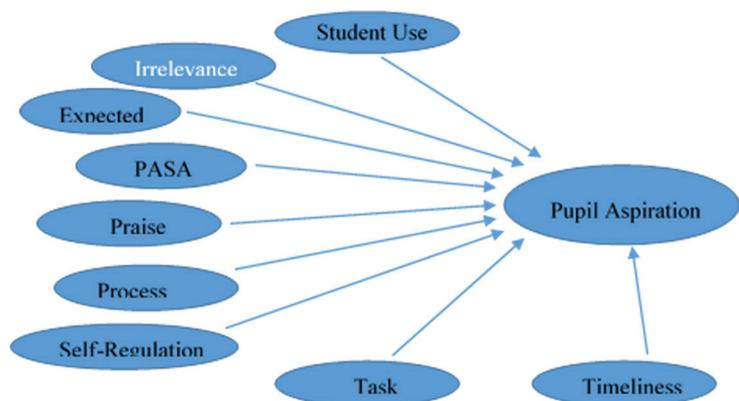


Figure 2. The Hypothesized Structural Model 1

The hypothesized structural Model 1 was tested assuming the relationship. There were nine hypothesized causal paths altogether. Initially, there were 37 observed variables for the construct Feedback Conceptions and 25 observed variables for Pupil Aspirations. After going through few procedures such as exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), it left with 35 observed variables for Feedback Conceptions and 20 for Pupil Aspirations. Model 1 was evaluated for model fit to look at how well the structural model explained the data. The overall X^2 value was 2793.429 and the degree of freedom was 633. The indices of fit showed $X^2/df = 4.413$; $GFI = .820$; $CFI = .900$ and $RMSEA = .052$. This shows that the model is not fit. Then, the MIs were reviewed. Few items were deleted due to low estimates parameter value and the overlap of item content. The overlap of item 34 ('I give feedback as soon as I finish the lesson') and item 35 ('I feel that I want to give feedback after two days receiving students' work') was when teachers felt that both items were similar in terms of timing of giving feedback. When analysis was conducted with the final model (Model 4), one item was deleted due to low parameter estimates. This is supported by the fact that particular item is skewed negatively. Then, the goodness of fit statistics was checked. The researcher decided to stop at this point. The estimation of the final model (Model 4) produced few outputs; 1) The X^2/df value was 3.675 ($X^2 = 1120.875$ and $df = 305$) hence showing a statistically significant discrepancy between the model and the data; 2) Fit statistics showed a value of: $CFI = .942$; $RMSEA = .050$ and $GFI = .910$; 3) Nine structural paths were statistically significant as shown by the critical values and p-values. Looking at the standardized estimates, all values were less than 1.0 and above .30 which agree with Chin (1998) who states that for a meaningful value, a standardized estimate has to be not less than .2; 4) All error variances and co-variances were statistically significant; 5) The value of squared multiple correlations (R^2) (how much variance in a variable is explained by difference in another variable) were determined. The higher the value of R^2 meaning that better fits the model to the data; 6) The final model (Model 4) consists of 55 items whereby initially it is 62 items altogether as shown in Model 1.

Table 2. AMOS Output for Model 4 for Standardized Estimates

	Standardized Estimate
Pupil Aspiration ←----- Irrelevance	-0.022
Pupil Aspiration ←----- Student Use	0.293
Pupil Aspiration ←----- Expected	0.379
Pupil Aspiration ←----- PASA	0.436
Pupil Aspiration ←----- Praise	0.253
Pupil Aspiration ←----- Process	0.324
Pupil Aspiration ←----- Self-Regulation	0.508
Pupil Aspiration ←----- Task	0.445
Pupil Aspiration ←----- Timeliness	0.297

All the four models are compared in Table 3. It shows how the fit indices have improved from Model 1 to Model 4. Although a model could be improved by deleting the constructs

and the non-significant paths, the issue of having a strong theoretical justification should be considered as well (Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008).

Table 3. Values of Fit Statistics of All the Four Hypothesized Models

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
X ² /df	4.413	4.233	3.778	3.675
CFI	.900	.922	.923	.942
RMSEA	.052	.052	.052	.050
GFI	.820	.850	.866	.910
Number of items	62	61	59	55
Multivariate Kurtosis	380.232	380.102	288.472	168.473

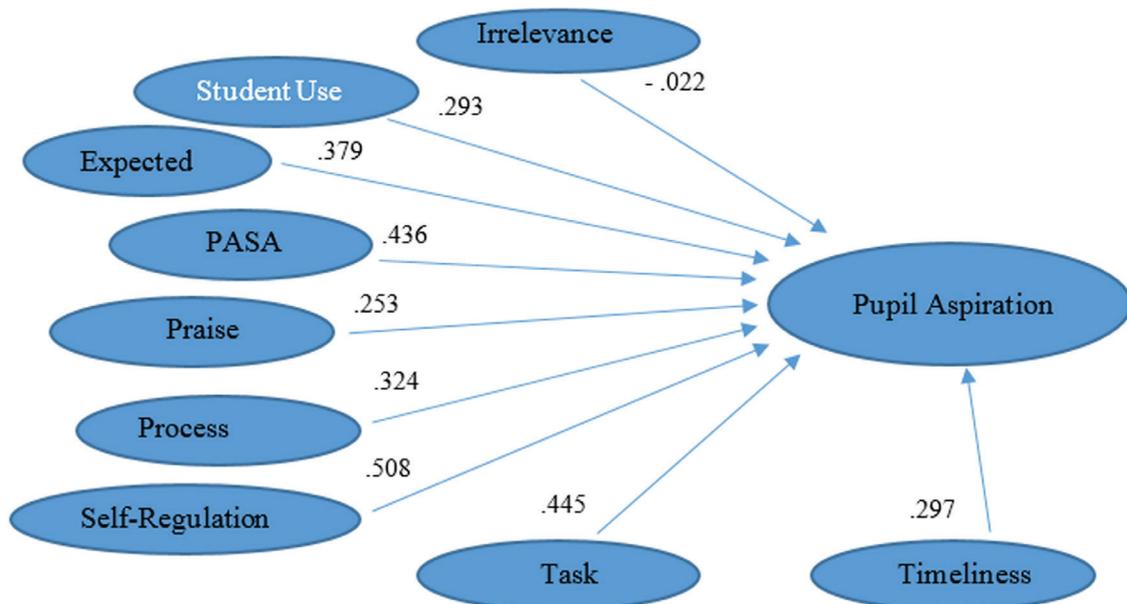
**Figure 3. The Final Causal Path with the Standardised Estimates**

Table 4. Hypothesis and Results

Hypothesis	Result	Content
H _{1a}	Support	The conception of Irrelevance is positively associated with Pupil Aspiration
H _{1b}	Support	The conception of Improvement is positively associated with Pupil Aspiration
H _{1c}	Support	The conception of Accountability is positively associated with Pupil Aspiration
H _{1d}	Support	The conception of Praise is positively associated with Pupil Aspiration
H _{1e}	Support	The conception of Task is positively associated with Pupil Aspiration
H _{1f}	Support	The conception of Process is positively associated with Pupil Aspiration
H _{1g}	Support	The conception of Self-Regulation is positively associated with Pupil Aspiration
H _{1h}	Support	The conceptions of PASA is positively associated with Pupil Aspiration
H _{1i}	Support	The conceptions of Prompt is positively associated with Pupil Aspiration

Figure 3 shows the final causal path together with the standardized estimates value. All the nine paths were statistically significant. The paths reflected the impact of all the nine constructs from feedback conceptions on Pupil Aspiration. No path has been deleted from the final model. Table 4 shows all the hypothesis were supported.

Discussion

The *Teachers Conception of Feedback* (TCoF) inventory elicits attitudes towards nine beliefs or conceptions (feedback: is irrelevance, is worthwhile as it helps students learn, is accountable, peer and self-assessment, is encouraging, as a processing of information, focusing at the self-regulation level, as a task or product or time suitable for the students to receive feedback). When two items which was the outlier items were removed, this Malaysian CFA Model ends up with nine constructs. This is similar to New Zealand Model which is also turns out to be fit with nine constructs (Brown, Harris, O'Quin, & Lane, 2015). However, the Louisiana Model is a 7-factor model with two factors (Independent and Irrelevant) that were deleted from the model. The nine conceptions had statistically significant loadings on Pupil Aspirations, accounting for about 9% of outcome variance. All conceptions loaded positively on Pupil Aspirations. These findings are supported by the fact that teachers' conception could influence students' learning (Lopez-Iniguez & Pozo, 2014). In addition, the student teachers' conceptions outlined here and their relationship to pupil aspirations are supported by the findings of Brown (2004). Brown found that teachers' conceptions could influence students' conception

which in turn would influence students' learning as conceptions do have an impact on students' learning (Brown & Hirschfield, 2008).

When the model fits the data, it means that our hypothesis is not rejected. However, there might be variables which are not included in the study and could be more influential than the one existed. Another issue is, we will be more confident with the model if we could produce a model whereby when the model is replicated over time, it keeps fitting.

Findings from the study provided evidence to support that self-regulation task were associated significantly with Pupil Aspiration, and hence expands the conceptual framework developed in this study regarding the assessment reform in the Malaysian educational context. The positive relationship between self-regulation and pupil aspiration indicated that facilitating the way students monitor and regulate actions towards their learning goals could influence them in developing various skills in their learning. As pointed by Hattie & Timperly (2007), self-regulation in an effective learner provide them with a good self-control, self-direction and self-discipline and then focusing them to the attainment of their personal goals whereas in a less effective learners, self-regulation does not really functioning in influencing the monitoring and directing actions of students. Hence, a less effective learner might depend more on external factors such as teachers, peers or tasks given to them. In enhancing the students' self-generated thoughts and feelings, a teacher must have a strong belief that feedback is about helping students to evaluate their own work by themselves or with only minor instruction from teachers, for example. Or, feedback is about the

generation of ideas to improve their learning without being tied to the teachers.

The findings of this research corroborated a study in New Zealand which links the conception of assessment to students' performance. So, the findings of this study clearly show us that the Asian and Western scenario no longer shows a very much difference. This is quite a good sign to the Malaysian teachers in continue to be working hard to ensure the success of the future generation. A study which is conducted in New Zealand involving 3469 secondary school students and is looking at the influence of the students' conceptions of assessment on their reading comprehension (Brown & Hirschfeld, 2008). The findings show that the belief of students towards the four components of the assessment conceptions ('assessment improves achievement', 'assessment makes students accountable', 'assessment is irrelevant' and 'assessment is enjoyable') do really makes a difference in the reading comprehension scores of the students. How does this happen? When students are able to transform their mental abilities into the attainment of knowledge and skills and those who have more confidence in themselves, then they are able to achieve more on any educational outcomes (Rotter, 1982).

A number of limitations for the present study are that this study is surveyed only on student teachers' perceptions and not considering views from other parties such as pupils, head teachers, teachers or officers from the ministry. Furthermore, it is conducted one shot as it is a cross-sectional study so it limits the findings. The range of items is also limited when they are deleted during confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling process. Future studies might adopt qualitative approach as to gain an in-depth on both variables. And, it is also recommended that future study examine factors which might mediate the association between feedback conceptions and pupil aspiration.

This study shows that the relationship between process and product dimension as suggested by Stufflebeam (1971) is implied in the Malaysian educational context concerning feedback conceptions and pupil aspirations. In other words, the more conceptual understanding in Assessment for learning gained by the teachers in schools is more likely to improve the knowledge and skills gained by pupils. In addition, this study

has also given the opportunity for the issue on Assessment for learning to be expanded especially within the school context in a non-western country. Malaysia is not yet a developed country and this study contributes an expansion to the existing knowledge regarding assessment for learning, which is the focus of classroom assessment in current years. The data gained could help the ministry or school administrations to better plan the continuous professional development which is align to teachers' understanding. Although the program might be too costly, having looked at the influence towards pupil aspirations might make us to rethink about it. This inventory could also be used as a useful tool in evaluating teachers all over the country regarding their belief system which could then influence the assessment reform in Malaysia. Several recommendations are suggested such as to proceed future research using qualitative research. Or, research could also be conducted using modern measurement model.

CONCLUSION

Nowadays, there is a need for teachers from all levels to continuously upgrading their knowledge and skills in assessment methods and techniques to keep updated with the latest educational development. Hence, the issue of belief system towards assessment especially assessment for learning should not be neglected. This study has contributed to the body of knowledge which highlights a teacher's conception of feedback which is the main component in assessment for learning is an important factor that can contribute to an improved knowledge and skills of pupil. Therefore an understanding towards the strategies and techniques on feedback should be given an increased attention, be it during teacher training program or in conducting courses for already trained in-service teachers. However, teachers' beliefs towards feedback should not be used as the sole means for predicting Pupil Aspirations. A structural equation model looking at the factors contributing to Pupil Aspiration might be a good way of looking at all the factors involved. To summarise, good teachers are those who will engage in improving their belief systems and hence, improving their practises so as to continually improve their students' performance.

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