



Patriotism among Secondary School Students and Its Relationship with their Interests towards Learning History

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Abstract

In this modern era, students are found to be lacking in their spirit of patriotism. This paper is based on a descriptive study using questionnaires to collect the data. The objective of the study is to identify patriotism among form four students (16 years old) according to gender, race and subject streams. The study also aims to determine the relationship between patriotism and students' interests towards learning history. The sample of the study consists of 120 students who were chosen randomly from two secondary schools in Penang (40 Malays, 40 Chinese and 40 Indians). The questionnaires using 4 Likert scales consists of 40 items (30 items were on patriotism and 10 items were on students' interest towards learning history) were distributed to students. The data obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed using Independent Samples t-test, one way ANOVA and Pearson correlation. Findings indicated that there was no significant difference in students' mean score for patriotism according to gender and subject streams. This study revealed that the Malay students' mean score for patriotism was significantly higher compared with the Chinese and Indian students. In addition, the findings also showed that there was a significant correlation between the students' mean score for patriotism and their interests towards learning History. These findings have strong theoretical, pedagogical and practical implications. In terms of theoretical implication the findings support constitutional patriotism by Muller. In terms of practical implications teachers should employ the right strategies and use effective teaching materials to enhance students' interest and understanding of History which will also help to enhance their level of patriotism. In terms of practical implication Ministry of Education, Teachers Training Division and other stake holders should find ways to unite young generation by bridging their gap in patriotism.

Keywords: Patriotism, Gender, Subject streams, Race, History.

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1. Introduction

In the present age of globalization study on nationalism, patriotism and citizenship has been concern of educationist. As stressed by Grammes (2011) that nationalism, patriotism and citizenship have been ambivalent educational concepts. The education system in Malaysia has always been the main channel used to create united and patriotic citizens of the country. According to Lee (2002) education has always been perceived as the core determinant factor in creating national unity as well as to initiate loyalty among the multiracial citizens of Malaysia. In the Malaysian Education System, History is one of the compulsory subjects to be taken by all students at the secondary school level, as specified in the Secondary School Integrated Curriculum or locally known as *Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah (MEM, 1989)*. Subsequently, one of the main objective in the national education system is to inculcate the spirit of patriotism in students. The curriculum on History at the secondary school level has been geared towards cultivating the spirit of patriotism among pupils, through the appreciation of local history and understanding the values of unity and tolerance among the different races, strengthening their identity as Malaysians and promoting goodwill with other countries in the globalized world.

1.1. Statement of Problem

In this modern era, students are found to be lacking in their spirit of patriotism. There is an example of an incident where the Malaysian National Anthem was made into a rap song and the contents of the song were altered such that it insulted the nation and the song was broadcasted over the internet. This shows the low spirit of patriotism in the student (Ku Hasnita and Mohd Haizam, 2009). According to Ku Hasnita (2007) and Aniza (2008) the act of the student in altering the lyrics of the Malaysian National Anthem has left a black mark on the spirit of unity in the multiracial society of Malaysia. There are many similar incidents which clearly showed how low the spirit of national pride is among the younger generations (Ahmad Shah *et al.*, 2011). According to Awang (1983) the education system that was formed after independence faced the crucial challenge of developing the spirit of patriotism and national pride among the younger generation.

Awang (1983) also opined that the creation of a nation depends on the foundation of patriotism in order to build a sense of loyalty and national pride among the citizens. Mohammad (2010) is worried about the phenomena in Malaysian society that has always been busy trying to create a nation that is worthy of respect in the international arena but has neglected the values of citizenship and independence. According to Suhaimi (2005) there are a few indicators that can be used to measure the fading spirit of patriotism, such as the rise in crime rate, vandalism, the selling of national secrets, CD piracy and corrupted politics, all of which work towards creating a negative image of the country. Sitti *et al.* (2015) also opined that the spirit of patriotism among the young generation is declining.

Many researchers are therefore of the opinion that History as a school subject can be used as the main tool to inculcate and strengthen the spirit of national loyalty and identity among Malaysians (Awang, 1983; Abdul, 2000; Mohd and Rohani, 2004). Malaysia is a multiracial country, as such, with the right knowledge and appreciation of local history, students should be able to understand the mind-set of the local society and the nation, and its relations to world history (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2000). It is also hoped that patriotism will be a unifying factor among multiracial and multi-ethnic groups in Malaysia and resolve the differences and tension between the groups. The May 13 1969 racial clash in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia which had created a black mark in Malaysian history after independence was also as a result of racial tension, economic divide among races and lack of patriotism. Since then the Malaysian government, especially the Ministry of Education has taken rigorous steps to unite the people in Malaysia through cultivation of their love for the nation. Five tenets were formulated by Malaysian government to uphold unity among people to ensure patriotism. These are:

1. Faith in God
2. Loyalty to King and Country
3. Supremacy of Constitution
4. Supremacy of Law
5. Courtesy and Chastity

In Malaysian context the spirit of patriotism is vital for the multiracial society to live harmoniously despite their vast differences in culture and religious belief. Through the teaching of History in schools students learn to appreciate the sacrifices of various races and ethnic groups in Malaysia to achieve the independence. In addition, they also learn and understand the existence of plural society in Malaysia and appreciate the contribution of all the races and ethnic groups in nation building. Cultural diversity is accepted and respected. Besides that, through History students also learn to appreciate the global civilization and respect other nations. In other words patriotism instilled through the History curriculum (MEM, 1989) prepare students to be open minded, tolerant, promote goodwill and lead a harmonious life within and outside the country.

Research related to patriotism is very limited in Malaysia. As such this study embarks on patriotism among Malaysian students according to gender, subject stream and race (Malay, Chinese and Indian). Since History is used as tool to cultivate patriotism among students, this study also investigates the relationship between interest towards learning History and patriotism.

In this study, patriotism is defined as students' love and pride towards the country (Curti, 1946; LaMachia, 2000; Haji, 2005; Muhamad, 2009). Patriotism is also related to the practice of patriotic values, how students perceive teaching of patriotism in the History subject and students' interest towards learning History.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

The study seeks to identify patriotism generally among form four students in two secondary schools, according to gender, subject stream and race. Apart from that, this study also hopes to determine the relationship between patriotism and the interest of students towards learning History.

1.3. Research Hypotheses

There are four hypotheses formulated and tested in this study. The hypotheses are stated in the form of null hypotheses and they were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. The hypotheses are as follows:

- Ho 1 :** There is no significant difference in the overall mean scores of students' patriotism based on gender.
- Ho 2 :** There is no significant difference in the overall mean scores of patriotism based on subject streams.
- Ho 3 :** There is no significant difference in the overall mean scores of students' patriotism based on race.
- Ho 4 :** There is no significant relationship between the students' mean scores on patriotism and their interest towards learning History.

2. Literature Review

The word patriotism originates from the Greek word *patriot*, meaning *fellow countryman* and *patrice* means fatherland or country. Patriotism is normally defined as the feeling of love and loyalty towards the nation. According to [Ruhanie \(2005\)](#) patriotism is the manifestation of the willingness to fight and sacrifice for the country. There is a difference between patriotism and nationalism; patriotism is not based on ideology whereas nationalism is based on a nation's ideology. Nationalism is cultivated after patriotism is instilled among individuals in a society ([Ahmad Shah et al., 2011](#)). [Doob \(1964\)](#) stressed that nationalism is more related to the ideology of a race, language and culture whereas patriotism is associated with love and feelings towards the country. However, [Zdenko \(2011\)](#) warns that schools should not promote extreme patriotism which may lead to hostility towards other countries, international tensions and conflicts.

2.1. Constitutional Patriotism Theory

The Constitutional Patriotism Theory which was first introduced by [Muller \(2007\)](#) is based on the Social Controversial theory which offers a rational and modern explanation that is related to the Constitutional Patriotism theory by Habermas. The main point about this constitutional patriotism theory is that it supports the rules based on free, democratic and liberal citizenship that spells equality for all ([Muller, 2007](#)). Constitutional patriotism is said to be about loyalty and identity, which is related to political beliefs and it inculcates the concept of history in some ways and also the re-construction of moral development.

Constitutional patriotism also has its own boundaries; each individual needs to recognize his own as well as others' freedom, acknowledge the rights of equality and learn to live together in a fair manner. Constitutional patriotism also gives focus to political boundary. In this matter, the lack of liberal thinking is more general, which in turn translates into political boundaries.

Study by [Omelchenko et al. \(2015\)](#) in Russia indicate that patriotism is not only love and respect for the country, but education as a whole, battle against drugs and alcohol, labour for the welfare of the state, care for people and so on. Their findings show that factors blocking patriotic feelings are low standard of living, lack of institutional trust, social inequality and uncertainty. A study by [Egorova \(2015\)](#) in Russia concluded that school and family play a vital role in the development of patriotic feelings of children.

In this study, patriotism refers to the feeling of love and loyalty towards a country and willingness to sacrifice for the development of the country in a broader and positive perspective. A student's patriotism is measured through three constructs, namely the feeling of love towards the country, patriotic value practices and also patriotism through history.

2.2. Studies on Patriotism

[Holley \(2006\)](#) has studied the level of patriotism among teenagers at the age of 18 as well as adults. The study sample consisted of 608 individuals, whereby 304 of them were individuals from the age of 18 to 49 and the other 304 were individuals from the age of 50 and above. The findings showed that the males were more patriotic compared to their female counterparts and males over the age of 50 were more patriotic compared to the teenagers. Apart from that, those who earn higher salaries and have better education were found to be more patriotic. A study in Australia by [Betts and Virginia \(1997\)](#) revealed that Australian-born of Australian-born parents are more patriotic than migrants and their Australian-born children. On the other hand a study by [Ho \(2006\)](#) among 243 Form Four students in Johor, Malaysia indicated that there was a high level of patriotism among the multi-ethnic students.

2.3. The Relationship between Patriotism and History

[Chua \(2007\)](#) studied the values of patriotism in the process of learning and teaching the History subject in secondary schools. The findings showed that the teachers used minimum time to inculcate the elements of patriotism among students. The findings also revealed that the absorption of patriotic values in the process of learning and teaching History is relatively low in the four schools. On the other hand a study by [Mohmad \(2006\)](#) indicated that direct incorporation of elements of patriotism in teaching History had a significant effect in enhancing students' patriotism.

The study by [Rahmat \(2007\)](#) also showed that there is a relationship between the learning of History and the spirit of patriotism. His study indicated that students with high interest in history also had high spirits of patriotism. As stressed by [Schraw and Lehman \(2001\)](#) interest is actually a positive attitude regarding an aspect that is chosen from the surroundings, which triggers a person to become more active in a certain field.

Similarly a study by [Rambely and Nor \(2006\)](#) also indicated that undergraduate students who have high scores in History at high school also have high scores in citizenship courses. This finding clearly showed that the students' knowledge in History had helped them to understand and achieve high scores in the citizenship courses. In contrast a study by [Anuar \(2001\)](#) in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia showed that 76% of teachers are not prepared to instil elements of patriotism in teaching History. The majority of the teachers find that it is much easier to instil moral values compared to elements of patriotism.

Studies by Putman (1998) also indicated that most teachers do not have the skills to instil patriotism in the process of teaching and learning. Similarly Haminah (2010) asserted that teachers were unable to instil the patriotic spirit among students during History because of low literacy level among students (13 years old).

2.4. Patriotism Race and Ethnicity

Ku Hasnita and Mohd Haizam (2009) studied the level of patriotism among students in higher institutions in Klang Valley, Malaysia. The findings showed that the level of patriotism among non-Malay students was at a moderate level. A similar study by Ahmad Shah *et al.* (2011) also showed that most of the students in public universities who join PALAPES (voluntary army officers) are Malays and the number of non-Malays were obviously very low. The researchers concluded that the patriotic spirit among non-Malay students in Malaysian public universities is very low. Similarly a study by Mohd *et al.* (2013) among 1010 youths in Malaysia indicated that the level of patriotism of the Malay youths was the highest, followed by the indigenous youths from Sabah and Sarawak, next was the Indians and lowest was the Chinese youths.

Studies by Mohmad (2006) in Johor, Malaysia indicated that there is no significant difference among students in their level of patriotism according to race. Parallel to Mohmad (2006) findings, studies by Rambely and Nor (2006) also revealed that there is no difference among students in their level of patriotism according to race. A study by Anuar *et al.* (2009) among 436 form five students (17 years old), from the states of Perlis and Penang, Malaysia, showed that there is no significant difference in students' achievement in History according to race.

2.5. Gender Gap in Patriotism and History

Studies on the effects of gender on patriotism are limited in Malaysia. However studies by Anuar *et al.* (2009) highlighted that there was no significant difference between male and female trainees in their knowledge, perception and understanding of patriotism. Similarly study by Anuar *et al.* (2009) indicated there is no significant difference in students' achievement in History based on gender. A study by Ramesh (2004) also indicated that there was no significant difference in students' interest towards learning History based on gender. Findings by Rambely and Nor (2006) also revealed that there was no significant difference in students' scores in citizenship courses based on gender. A study by Holley (2006) also indicated there was no significant difference in patriotism among youth and adults based on gender. However, several studies such as that by Machin and Sandra (2006) revealed that there is a marked gender gap in students' achievement in school.

On the other hand a study in Germany by Weis *et al.* (2013) revealed that female students outperformed the males in German achievement and behavior regulation. A similar study by Pajares and Valiante (2001) showed that female students have better writing skills, self-efficacy and self-concept, compared with the male students.

A study by Chua (2007) indicated that there were no significant difference in the patriotic spirits among the students based on their field of study. Similarly, a study by Rambely and Nor (2006) in a public university in Kedah, Malaysia also showed that there is no significant difference in the scores on citizenship courses among students based on their field of study.

3. Methodology

This study employed descriptive research design. The study sample consists of 120 Form Four students who were chosen randomly from two National Secondary Schools located in the district of South Seberang Perai, Penang (40 Malay students, 40 Chinese students and 40 Indian students). The researchers employed purposive random sampling in choosing the sample. The sample consisted of 50 students from the science stream and the remaining 70 students were from the humanities field.

Table-1a. Students from science stream and humanities.

Stream	Race			Total
	Malay	Chinese	Indian	
Science	20	15	15	50
Humanities	20	25	25	70
Total	40	40	40	120

3.1. Study Instrument

A set of questionnaires consisting of 40 items was used as the instrument in this study. Section A in the questionnaire consists of the students' personal information (gender, race and stream). Section B consists of 30 items on patriotism, 10 items were related to the feelings and love towards the country, 10 items were related to the practice of patriotic values and 10 items were related to patriotism in the History subject. In section C there were 10 items related to students' interest towards learning History. The items in the questionnaires used 4 Likert Scales (4 = strongly agree, 3 = agree, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree). The scores for all the items for each construct (patriotism item 1- 30 and interest towards learning History item 31 to 40) were added and analyzed using the SPSS programs for Windows version 24.

The validity of the questionnaire was obtained by asking two senior History lecturers from the School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia and also two senior History teachers (having 20 years of experience in teaching the subject) to validate the items in the questionnaire. Sekaran and Bougie (2013) explained that validity refers to how precisely the study instrument can be used to measure the concept that is being focused on and not some other matters.

3.2. Pilot Study

A pilot study was carried out in order to obtain the reliability of the questionnaire. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2013) reliability refers to the stability and consistency of the instrument being used to measure the concept and to assist in getting access to a certain measurement. The pilot study was carried out on 45 Form Four

students (15 Malay students, 15 Chinese students, and 15 Indian students) whereby the characteristics of the students were similar to the study sample. The findings of the pilot study were then analysed using the SPSS Programme for Windows version 24.0 (Statistical Package for The Social Science). The reliability co-efficient that was used for the purpose of this study was Cronbach's Alpha. The overall Alpha Value for the patriotism items was 0.968. According to Pallant (2001) the value of a Cronbach's Alpha which is 0.80 and above indicates a good level of reliability.

3.3. Data Collection

The actual study was carried out in two sub-urban schools located in the district of South Seberang Perai, Penang, Malaysia. Before conducting the study, the researchers had gathered data regarding the students who were multiracial in composition at the selected schools. The researchers also obtained permission from the Malaysian Ministry of Education and the school principal to conduct the study. The researchers had also prepared the questionnaires to be distributed to the students.

3.4. Data Analysis

Quantitative data which were gathered from the questionnaires were analysed using SPSS Windows version 24.0. The researchers used the t-test (Independent Samples t-test), one way ANOVA test, and the Pearson correlation test to analyse the data. The significant level that was predetermined was $p < 0.05$, in order to accept or reject the null hypothesis.

4. Findings and Discussion

Ho 1: There is no significant difference in the overall mean scores on students' patriotism based on gender.

Table-1b. Students' overall mean scores on patriotism according to gender

	Mean	Mean Diff	T Value	Df	P Value
Male	3.0252				
Female	3.0841	-0.05892	-0.537	118	0.592

* Level of significance at $p < 0.05$

The findings from Table 1b show that the mean score of the male students towards patriotism is lower (Mean=3.0252) than the female students (3.0841). The findings from the Independent Samples t-test showed that there were no significant difference in the overall mean score on patriotism among the students according to gender (t value = -0.537; df=118; $p=0.592$). As such, the findings failed to reject null hypothesis 1.

The results indicated there is no significant difference between the male and female students in their level of patriotism. The present findings are parallel to the findings by Holley (2006) who also stated that there is no significant difference between the male and female students in their patriotic spirit. This was probably because their History teachers were experienced and have knowledge and skills to cultivate the knowledge of patriotism among their students irrespective of gender. The findings also support the findings by Rambely and Nor (2006) which showed that there was no significant difference in students' scores in the citizenship course according to gender. Similarly studies by Anuar *et al.* (2009) and Ramesh (2004) also indicated that there was no significant difference in students' achievement in History according to gender. However these findings contradict the findings by Weis *et al.* (2013); Pajares and Valiante (2001); Machin and Sandra (2006) which revealed that there were gender gaps among students in their achievement scores.

Ho 2: There is no significant difference in the overall mean scores of patriotism based on subject streams.

Table-2. Students' mean scores on patriotism based on their subject streams.

	Mean	Mean Diff	T Value	Df	P Value
Science	3.1693	0.19076	1.747	118	0.083
Humanities	2.9786				

* Level of significance at $p < 0.05$

The findings from Table 2 show that the mean score on patriotism among the science stream students is higher (mean = 3.1693) than the students from the Humanities (mean = 2.9786). The results of the Independent Sample T- Test show that there is no significant difference in students' patriotism based on their subject streams (t value=1.747; df=118 ; $p=0.083$). Therefore, these findings failed to reject the null hypothesis 2.

The findings from this study also revealed that there is no significant difference in the students' scores in patriotism according to their stream of studies. Students from the science stream and humanities revealed same level of patriotic spirit. This is probably due to the fact that in the Malaysian Education System, History is taught as a core subject at the secondary level and one of the main objective in teaching History is to cultivate the spirit of patriotism among students. Findings by Chua (2007) also indicated that there were no significant difference in the patriotic spirit among the students according to their streams of studies. In addition, these findings also support earlier findings by Rambely and Nor (2006) which indicated that there is no significant difference in the scores on citizenship courses among undergraduates according to their field of study.

Ho 3 : There is no significant difference in the overall mean scores of students' patriotism based on race.

Table-3a. The one way ANOVA test showing the difference in students overall mean scores on patriotism according to their race.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F Value	p Value
Between the Malays, Chinese, and Indians	16.392	2	8.196		0.000

* Level of significance at $p < 0.05$

The ANOVA test in Table 3a shows that there is a significant difference between the Malay, Chinese, and Indian students in their overall scores on patriotism ($F = 37.274$, p value= 0.000 , $df = 2$, $N=120$).

Table-3b. Post Hoc Tukey Test comparing the mean difference in students' scores on patriotism according to race

		Mean Difference	Std. Error	p value
Malay	Chinese	0.90500	0.10485	0.000
	Indian	0.47333	0.10485	0.000
Chinese	Malay	-0.90500	0.10485	0.000
	Indian	-0.43167	0.10485	0.000
Indian	Malay	-0.47333	0.10485	0.000
	Chinese	0.43167	0.10485	0.000

* Level of significance at $p < 0.05$

The findings of Post Hoc Tukey Test in [Table 3a](#), also indicate that the Malay students' overall mean score for patriotism is significantly higher compared with the Chinese (Mean difference=.90, $p=.000$) and Indian students (Mean difference=.47, $p=.000$). These findings show that the patriotic spirit among the Malay students is significantly higher compared with the Chinese and Indian students. Apart from that, the scores of the Indian students are also significantly higher compared to the Chinese students (Mean difference=.43, $p=.000$). The Chinese students had the lowest patriotic scores compared to the Malay and Indian students.

On the other hand the findings revealed that there is a significant difference in their mean scores for patriotism according to race. The mean score for patriotism among Malay students is significantly higher than the non-Malay students. These findings support earlier findings by [Ku Hasnita and Mohd Haizam \(2009\)](#); [Ahmad Shah et al. \(2011\)](#) and [Mohd et al. \(2013\)](#) which showed that the level of patriotism among the younger generations of the non-Malays is lower than the Malays. Study by [Betts and Virginia \(1997\)](#) also indicated that migrant origin matters in the level of patriotism. According to [Mohmad \(2006\)](#) and [Rahmat \(2007\)](#) the spirit of patriotism is closely related to teaching and learning of History in schools. The History syllabus are more related to Malay cultural background and the Malay students who are more fluent in the Malay language (the medium of instruction in schools) are able to understand and appreciate the History lessons more than their non-Malay counterparts which could be a contributing factor of low level of patriotism among non-Malay students. On the other hand these findings contradict the findings by [Mohmad \(2006\)](#) and [Rambely and Nor \(2006\)](#) which indicated that there is no significant difference in students patriotism according to race.

The significant difference in the overall mean scores on patriotism among different races (students) in this study could be due to the influence of their cultural background, parental influence and social influence ([Egorova, 2015](#)). The non- Malay students (Chinese and Indians) in Malaysia are Malaysian citizen and already fourth or fifth generation of their forefathers from China and India. As such, there should not be any significant difference in their scores for patriotism according to race. We should not point fingers and blame any party in this matter. Further studies should be conducted to determine factors contributing to these differences.

Ho 4 : There is no significant relationship between the students' scores on patriotism and their interest towards learning History.

Table-4. Pearson correlation between students' overall scores on patriotism and their scores on interest in learning History.

Pearson correlation between patriotism and interest towards learning History	
Correlation between patriotism and interest towards learning History	$r = 0.770$
	$p = 0.000$
	$N = 120$

* Level of significance at $p < 0.05$

The results from the Pearson correlation explained in [Table 4](#) indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between students' overall scores on patriotism and their scores on ' interest towards learning the History subject ($r = 0.770$; $p = 0.000$; $N = 120$). In other words students' patriotism is highly correlated with their interest towards learning History. Therefore, the findings failed to accept null hypothesis 4.

This study also indicated that there is a significant correlation between students' interest in learning history and their scores for patriotism. These findings are in line with the findings from an earlier study conducted by [Rahmat \(2007\)](#) which indicated that the interest towards History has a positive impact on the spirit of patriotism among the students. Besides that, these findings also support the findings by [Putman \(1998\)](#) and [Mohmad \(2006\)](#) which showed positive relationship between History and patriotism.

5. Conclusion

This study has resulted in a few interesting and crucial findings which has strong theoretical, pedagogical and practical implications. The findings revealed that there is no significant difference in the scores on patriotism among students based on gender. The findings indicated that the male and female students are almost equal in their patriotic spirit. Apart from that there is also no significant difference in their scores on patriotism based on subject streams. Students from the science steam and humanities exhibited no significant difference in their level of patriotism. These findings support constitutional patriotism by [Muller \(2007\)](#) which advocate that constitutional patriotism is about loyalty and identity which is related to political beliefs and it inculcates the concept of history in some ways and also the re-construction of moral development.

In contrast there was a significant difference in students mean score on patriotism according to race. The Malay students' mean score for patriotism was significantly higher compared with the Indian and Chinese students. The mean score on the patriotism of the Indian students was lower compared with the Malay students but was significantly higher compared with the Chinese students. A significant difference in patriotism among the secondary school students based on race is unhealthy because as Malaysians, all the races in the country should have high patriotic spirits. The curriculum and the co- curriculum activities in Malaysian Schools are geared to cultivate the spirit of positive patriotism among students equally. Besides that, a positive spirit of patriotism can unite all the races and ethnic groups in Malaysia towards goodwill, tolerance, love for the country and nation building. Further studies should be conducted in order to identify the factors that contribute to the lower level of

patriotism among the Chinese and Indian students compared to the Malay students. Further action should be taken by the school administrators, parents and the Ministry of Education to increase the level of patriotism among the Chinese and Indian students.

Current study also showed that there is a significant positive correlation between students' scores on patriotism and their interest towards learning History. This finding is very important since it explains that the students who have a high level of interest in History also have high scores in patriotism. Therefore, in terms of pedagogical implication, History teachers should employ the right strategies to enhance students' level of interest towards History. History teachers should also utilise effective teaching materials to arouse students' interest and understanding of History. Raising the interest in History among the students would also help to enhance the level of patriotism among the students.

In terms of practical implication Ministry of Education and Teachers Training Division and other stake holders should find ways to unite the young generation by bridging their gap in patriotism. This is important because in Malaysian context patriotism is vital for the next generation in order to face challenges in nation building irrespective of race, religion and culture. As stressed by *Sitti et al. (2015)* the spirit of patriotism should be cultivated among young generation so that they are proud of being Malaysian, have the spirit of loyalty and a sense of belonging to the country.

There are certain limitations in this study. The study sample only involves two secondary schools; and only Malay, Chinese and Indian students were involved in the study. As such, it is hoped that further studies will be carried out involving more schools from all the states in Malaysia, and also involving all the races and ethnic groups in order to get more in-depth findings regarding the level of patriotism among the students. Future studies can also be carried out in primary schools to determine the level of patriotism among primary school children. As this is a quantitative study, it is hoped in future researchers will employ both quantitative and qualitative approach to study how patriotic elements are cultivated among students through subjects taught in schools.

Apart from the above, the findings of this study indicate that cultivating patriotism among multiracial students is crucial and should be taken seriously by all parties especially teachers, Ministry of Education, parents and administrators. This is mainly because students are the future generation of the country and patriotism is one of the unifying factors among multi-racial and multi-ethnic groups in Malaysia.

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