

# Community-based approach towards sustainable environmental behaviour

<sup>1</sup>Tan Awang Besar Md and <sup>2</sup>Salleh Hj. Hassan

<sup>1</sup>Department of Communication, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia

<sup>2</sup>Director of Institute for Social Science Studies and Department of Communication, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia

## Abstract

Ten years after its nationwide implementation in the year 2000, many are reluctant to put 3R's (reduce, reuse and recycle) programme into practice. Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHLG) has even declared the recycling programme a failure mainly in changing people's mindset and behaviour. However, only few voluntary community-based associations at micro level have successfully adopted the environmentally friendly practices. How do these associations survive and operate up to more than 10 years after their formation? This study is interested to explore the success factors of four community-based associations in their effort to preserve the environment through their environmentally-friendly community-based activities. The data was gathered qualitatively using a semi structured in depth interview. Based on Positive Deviance approach, results revealed that the success factors were common values and practices (leadership, networking, cooperation, communication) and uncommon values and practices (age, gender, and other PD practices). These factors are crucial for a community-based project to remain active and sustainable. More importantly, uncommon PD practices can be replicated or imitated by others that follow the same footsteps. The result also indicates that only active community-based organizations are able to sustain even without access to special resources.

**Keywords:** Environmentally friendly practices, community-based project, Positive Deviance (PD).

## INTRODUCTION

Ten years after its nationwide implementation in the year 2000, many are reluctant to put 3R's (reduce, reuse and recycle) programme into practice. Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHLG) has even declared the recycling programme a failure, mainly in changing people's mindset and behaviour (Wee, Indera Syahrul, and Jamaluddin, 2008). Even though the programme does not seem to work as targeted, it does not mean that the recycling idea has come to an end. Concerted efforts amongst the government, community and public sector remained relevant and vital for future quality of life. In doing so, Local Agenda 21 (LA 21) initiatives should be seen as a reliable platform to promote a better cooperation between stakeholders such as the local authority, non-government based organizations, *Rukun Tetangga* (neighborhood watch), resident associations, government agencies, private sectors and others.

LA 21 is local-government-led with partnership initiatives to establish comprehensive action plan for environmental protection, economic prosperity and community well-being in the local area (Petaling Jaya City Council, 2007). LA 21 provides an opportunity for public participation especially in identifying issues, formulating action plans, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback towards sustainable development (Petaling Jaya City Council, 2007), of which is an important element under Chapter 28 of Agenda 21. Sustainable development envisions that today's quality of life must be maintained for future generation in order to have the same or better quality of life without compromising any imbalance exploitation of the natural resources and environment quality. However, a more specific plan outlined with regards to domestic waste management is stipulated under Chapter 21 of the Agenda 21. The plan outlined strategy stresses on minimizing waste and optimizing waste reuse and recycling by engaging various stakeholders with greater participation through partnership concept as well as awareness and education.

Nevertheless, the sustainable development and domestic waste management are clearly enshrined and spelled out in the LA 21 context.

### Background of the study

Initially, LA 21 pilot project began in March 2000 and was anchored by Ministry of Housing and Local Government Malaysia through a financial initiative from United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and fully supported by Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department (Petaling Jaya City Council, 2007). Petaling Jaya City Council is one of the few pioneers of local authorities who actively started with community based recycling. Various activities have been carried out to stimulate public's interest on sustainable development and the most prestigious one is the Best Neighborhood Competition. The competition was opened to all resident associations, *Rukun Tetangga* (Neighborhood Watch) and village committees in Petaling Jaya (PJ). The criteria include innovative initiatives and community development with a strong neighborhood spirit. This competition has attracted interest among the community-based organizations and encouraged them to spearhead with more programmes for the community in individual neighborhood areas.

The implementation of the programme includes establishing community recycling centre, enhancing 3Rs, waste composting project, networking with 3R players, making nature crafts and other community sustainable initiatives. For the purpose of this paper, four (4) out of seven community organizations recommended by the LA 21 coordinator are selected based on their active community programme participations, overall performance status and award appreciation achievement. The top seven community organizations listed in this study are Petaling Jaya Community Centre (PJCC), Damansara Jaya Residents and Owner Association, *Rukun Tetangga (RT) Flat PKNS Datuk Harun*, Residents Association of Taman Mayang Jaya, Sri Kelana Primary School, Kelana Jaya, Beautiful Gate Foundation for Disabled Petaling Jaya and Residents Association of SS3.

### RESEARCH PROBLEM

Despite being guided through cooperation and partnership with local authority, not many community-based organizations are considered as outstanding or successful. Only a few voluntary community-based projects at micro level have successfully adopted the environmentally friendly practices namely the 3Rs. How can these projects actually sustain and remain active, even after more than 10 years of their formation? According to Lee (2009), out of 94 residential groups in Petaling Jaya (PJ), only 20 residential groups have really

established the community-recycling project in their respective neighborhood area. Unfortunately, only a few of the groups are successfully maintaining their establishment by operating the eco-friendly programme. Among the reasons identified as its failure include a sudden loss of interest amongst the leadership and volunteers, the un conducive working environment and lack of proper recognition (Lee, 2009). Therefore, the sustainability of the programme has become a critical issue that need to be overcome immediately. As this study is more interested in exploring the insight into the success factors of four community-based projects of Community Based Organization (CBO), the failure factors will not be discussed.

These plausible success factors are most likely contribute to the success of putting their effort to protect the environment especially through the 3Rs initiatives. Currently, there is no empirical study conducted with regards to the community-based participation especially focusing on factors that keep them moving and continually contributing to a cleaner and safer environment. In doing so, this paper attempts to utilize the principle of the Positive Deviance (PD) in exploring factors fostering the sustainability of environmentally friendly community-based project.

### The principle of positive deviance

The Positive Deviance (PD) was first coined by Marian Zeitlin, a nutritionist of Turf University who tried to understand reasons children in some poor families are better nourished than others, even without access to any special resources. This idea was later adopted by Jerry Sternin and his wife, Monique Sternin, who were the founder of the Positive Deviance Initiative (Singhal, Sternin, and Dura, 2009). PD is a unique approach that is significantly applicable in addressing intractable and behavioural problem (Singhal, et al., 2009) and with the believes that the answers to the community's problems and solutions lie in existing local wisdom (Singhal and Dura, 2009).

Basically, PD is formed by two basic constructs: Positive and Deviance. 'Positive' refers to 'doing the things right', while 'Deviance' means 'engaging in behaviour which most of other did not' (Singhal and Dura, 2009). The other principle is that PD practices must be accessible to everyone and they are often simple and can be implemented immediately (Singhal and Dura, 2009). In other words, PD enables communities to discover the wisdom that are already in existence within the community and then imitate the act as solution to the problem. PD believes that community self-discovers solution and strategies are more likely to be implemented.

The Sternins have demonstrated the successful implementation of PD, starting with childhood malnutrition

**Table 1.** A comparison between traditional and PD practices in Misiones School, Argentina

Area of Impact	Traditional Practices	PD Practices
School –Family Relations	No opportunities given to parents who with little or no formal education to contribute in the educational process	Contribution by all parents to the school like holding skills workshops (e.g. sewing, woodworking), maintain the school building (mend the fences), and involve in organizing sport or activities for students
Teaching Methodology	Same assignment given to the whole class regardless of students' ability and age.	The class is divided into groups and assignments are modified to reflect students abilities in the group
Degree of community involvement	The communication between the school and community leaders is little	The leaders are identified and the problems are discussed together. Community leader involve actively in increasing retention
Nutrition	One meal only given to children during lunch time	Learning difficulty due to children hungry and breakfast are provided instead of lunch.

in Vietnam, and then expanded its successful application to a variety of intractable problems in diverse sectors, such as public health, education, and child protection, and in various countries include India, China, the Republic of Philippines, Indonesia, Cambodia, and some of the African countries (see Positive Deviance Initiative, 2009). With these PD notions, the Sterninshave resolved some problems emerging in the communities and successfully institutionalized them as new social change approach in this era(Positive Deviance Initiative, 2009).Having said that three(3) examples of PD workthat will be highlighted in this paper.

The first example is about combating malnutrition in Vietnam. The Sternins were given six months by Vietnamese Government to overcome childhood malnutrition among two third of under age of five children. Based on four village communities baseline survey, they found that some 64% of the weighted children were malnourished. However, they discovered that there are also children in these poor families who were well-nourished even without access to any special resources. Interestingly, a fewwell-nourished family members were added greens of sweet potato plantsin the meals. These greens provide nutrition such as beta carotene, iron, and calcium. In addition, they also added in children meals with tiny shrimps and crabs which they collected from the paddy fields into other children's meals(Singhal et al., 2009). Together with other uncommon feeding practices such as giving three or four time meals per day (as oppose to two meals), ensuring no waste of food and washing child hand before meals have become a turning point to the success of malnourished intervention in Vietnam.

Under theNorthern Uganda's Save the Children pilot project,which also known as 'PD girls' in March 2007, which targeted 500 young mothers and vulnerable girl survivors who had experiencing catastrophe of civil conflict. Together with 50 adult mentors who help them with community based guidance include farming, financial advice, and general socio - psychological supports

(Singhal and Dura, 2009). Local and outside experts only acted as listeners and facilitators by allowing PD inquiry to take place through self-discovery of the existence successful strategies used by some community membersto solve or prevent a particular problem (Singhaland Dura', 2009). In this case, Helene's practices intercropping technique that produces a great harvest. Most interestingly, she learned the intercropping skill from her father by mixing all seeds such as sunflower, cucumber and others in a basket before scattering in the field and let them grows together. It is clearly that PD inquiry helps people in the community to identify the solution, without extra resources. It is also able to address the problem effectively and allows such visible effective practices being replicated by others.

PD initiative is also usedto improve the pupil's retention rates in some of the Misiones School in rural Argentina. The PD school practices detected in self-discovery process such as teachers greeting parents warmly whenever they visit the school. As a result, parents felt comfortable in approaching the teachers(Dura and Singhal, 2009). The comparison of traditional and PD practices in Misiones School can be summarized into four areas of impacts as Table 1.

From the three PD initiatives discussed earlier, the notion of PD is to discover the existence of common and uncommon practices in which the latter is becoming a solution to the encountered problem. The problem could be due to a prolonged process without any tangible results which could not sustain people's interest. As argued by Lee and Lim (2006), communities are impatient and expect to see and feel the fruits of their involvement and contribution in a shorter time, or even immediately. Therefore, this paper is interested to explore reasons that make a few community-based programmeable to sustain and survive, even if it is involve voluntary pro-environmental practices. It is hoped that such findings will become an eye opener to other community-based associations to gain ideas and follow the same footsteps.

**Table 2.** Community-based Organizations Background and Recognition

PJCC	DJCRC	RT Flat Datuk Harun	TMJCC
Formation – 1996	2000	2004	2004
Leader – Male	Female	Male	Male
Project chairmanship-taking over from initiator	Taking over from two male initiator	Initiator	Taking over after 2 <sup>nd</sup> time failure
Major recycler of:	Major recycler	Minor recycler	Major recycler
• Paper	• Paper	• paper and magazine for handicraft	• Paper
• Electrical appliances	• Plastics	• plastic	• Plastics
• Plastic	• Books	• can and bottle	• Books
• Book	• Textiles	• compost	• Textiles
• Textiles	• Bottle and cans		• Bottle and cans
• Bottles and cans	• Computer scrap		• Computer scrap
Own recycling centre, but jointly with RT	Separate from main building, but under RA sub-committee	Women neighborhood under RT	Own centre under RA sub-committee
Activities organized	• Annual dinner		
For volunteer	• Family day	• Trip	• Education trip
• Trip		• free meal in all function	• Annual dinner
• Dinner party			
Recognition and Award			
Best Neighborhood Award	Best Neighborhood Award:	Best Neighborhood Award	Best Neighborhood Award
• 2001- 2 <sup>nd</sup>	• 2000 - 1st	• 2007 – 1st	• 2004 – 2 <sup>nd</sup>
Public Sector Innovation Award	• 2005 - 2 <sup>nd</sup>		• 2006, 2007, 2008 – consolation prize
• 2000	• 2009 - 1 <sup>st</sup>	Recognition fromPJ Police Department	Tetra Pak Drink Cartons Contest
Special Jury Award	Tetra Pak Drink Cartons Contest	Recognition from Department of Unity and National Integration, Petaling District	• 2008- Consolation prize
• 2002	• 2008- Highest drink package collector		
Rotary Preserve Planet Earth Award			
• 2002			
Recognition from Department of Unity and National Integration, Petaling District			

Note:

PJCC – Petaling Jaya Community Centre

DJCRC- Damansara Jaya Community Recycling Centre

RT Flat Datuk Harun- Rukun Tetangga Flat PKNS Datuk Harun

TMJCC – Taman Mayang Jaya Community Centre

## METHODOLOGY

A list of active community based organizations was recommended by MBPJ LA 21 Officer. Once the list was obtained, the researcher made calls to seek for permission and set an appointment. Out of seven potential organizations listed, only four of the organization representatives were willing and responded to the calls and agreed to be interviewed. The selection of the association was based on their prior achievements. Their background and achievement is summarized in Table 2.

This study applied qualitative method with a semi-structured interview. All of the informants are the key persons in the community recycling practices. Once the

appointment was set, the researcher made a visit and conducted the interview with the key informant. The interviews lasted about 30 to 40 minutes. The question was designed base on few general themes such as leadership, networking, corporation, communication channel, uniqueness and future expectation. To begin with, informant was asked to elaborate on the association background and followed by these main questions.

1. What make your community committee become one of the best environmental practices in PJ?
2. What is your success and how did your community achieve them?
3. How do you manage this community project?
4. How do you get connected with related agencies?

5. What kinds of supports are provided by those agencies with regard to recycling project?
6. How do you maintain neighborhood supports and participation for this project? Who actually are these people?
7. What types of supports are given by your neighborhood to your association?
8. What type of information do you share with them?
9. Which media channel is more effective and convincing when comes to disseminating and sharing recycling information? Why?
10. What are the challenges in making this project successful and sustainable?
11. What makes your community recycling project different than others?
12. What is your future expectation for this association?

Each interview was recorded, verbatim-transcript and non-verbal cue also noted. The transcriptions were scrutinized and analyzed according to the existing themes and sub-theme was added when necessary. Most importantly, the theme was taking into account the differences between common and uncommon qualities or practices among the community-based projects using the principal of PD. At the end of the process, the themes and sub themes were assigned to these common and uncommon quality or practice domains. The domain was both the common or uncommon values and practices. The results were interpreted and discussed based on this domain.

Interestingly, these positive common and uncommon activities have kept their organization moving forward even though without having access to any direct financial support. At the same time, they also worked and strived hard for their success and survival and generated their own income through the environmentally friendly practices like recycling and other initiatives. In general, three community based projects can be considered as major recycling centres, while the other one doing it in a smaller, but unique way.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The findings were divided into two parts; the value and practice. Both parts may reflect the common and uncommon qualities and practices in the studies of community-based projects. 'Value' refers to the qualities of project leaders, while 'practice' refers to the task carried out with regards to recycling behaviour. Generally, all project leaders demonstrated similar qualities or values of leadership, but their practices are slightly different between the community-based recycling projects. There are some uncommon practices that only can be found in a particular community based projects; nonetheless, such practices are accessible and can be imitated by others. This uncommon practice is in line with the PD principle, therefore it could be considered as 'PD

practice'.

## Common Values and Practices

There are five common factors identified among the recycling community-based projects that contribute to their sustainability and survival such as leadership, networking, co-operation, communication and motivation. These factors reflect the common and uncommon values and practices that exist in the recycling community-based approaches.

## Leadership

Leadership is one of the major factors that determine the sustainability and continuity of the community-based programme especially recycling. However, the dimension of leadership qualities varies; however, these values are important for community-based project's leaders. They include commitment, up for challenges, sacrifice and devotion, altruistic and visionary. These values are the indicators of leadership qualities that most likely in sustaining or maintaining the projects progress. All informants are highly committed and willing to sacrifice in order to get their projects moving. For instance, one of the informants states that "I don't want to give up and go off just like that. I am already 70 years old, I know I cannot survive doing all this, unless somebody come and take over." Another informant indicated that "This portfolio is not wanted one, you know, except me. I have been here about 10 years since 2000 until now." She further elaborated that, "two of us are confirmed every two weeks to be here and others just walk in when they are free, we do not force them. We are here even if they are not coming."

At times people know that they believe in success and are willing to take the challenge although there are times when they feel uncertain about what would be the outcome. Their willingness is very much related to the background of their existence. For instance, one informant stated that, "the earlier two trials were lead by some other appointed committee members, but not successful. Then in 2006, I took up the challenge. I offered myself to try for the third time for residents association to launch this recycling project." In doing so, he was not demotivated by his friends and other committee members' comments and further elaborated that, "they approach me and said this recycling project is not easy you know to be successful, very tough job you know. But this does not discourage me."

As a leader for recycling project, they have shown their willingness to sacrifice and devote themselves to the task with some altruistic beliefs. One informant states that, "I do all this because I enjoy doing it. Actually speaking, both of us enjoy it. That is why we could stand longer,

because we are committed. I am committed and devoted".The other informant pointed out that, "After going through all this hard work, I feel quite worth to conserve the environment. At least I feel proud because we had done something good to preserve the environment." Despite all that, one person's commitment will not go anywhere unless he/she is getting a full support from others.

All of informants have a visionary goal. For instance, one informant said, "Maybe you feel happy that you help to save the environment and we done our part. But we feel that there is a lot more to do." While the other informant said "the existing recycling project is considered successful, but I always feel want to further improve like forming organic composting and gardening." It is clear that with the help of a visionary leader, there are more opportunities for them to explore and make related community-based recycling project more active.

### **Networking**

Having a good networking system has demonstrated that the community-based programme is able to make them sustain and survive in performing their task. All of the informants have a strong network with local authority and related organization to their environmentally activities. For instance, all of the community-based organizations are well connected with local authority; in this case the MBPJ. One of the informants said, "MBPJ is one of our partners and we are quite close and have good relationship with them for any function. Whatever programme, they will invite residential associations." Another informant stated that, "every year we take part in recycling expo organized by MBPJ in conjunction with National Recycling Day. We also support MBPJ in the State Government's Merdeka Celebration." Therefore, the support from local authority is vital for their success and this has been mentioned by one informant that, "With initiatives from MBPJ, community will have courage to perform voluntary tasks and also boost the committee to continue being committed to run the programme."

Extending the networks with main recycler players under smart partnership initiatives are crucial. The networking is proven effective as one informant indicated that, "sometimes we call them, if we don't have enough space. Sometimes they call us before they are coming." Establish networking between the recycling collection centre with Dell Computer from Penang with the help of MBPJ has opened up a channel for computer scrap recycling. Besides, these recycling communities have a networking with other recycling players like soft-drink carton company (Tetra Pak) and textile company from Penang. Even putting a trust to a recycle company also demonstrated how they share close and good partnerships. For instance, one informant said that they received the cheque from recycling company for

recyclable materials sold based on understanding and reciprocal trust.

### **Cooperation**

Without a strong cooperation and support from committee members, such community-based programme would not be successful. Support from community is very crucial. These people who feel highly appreciated and understood about the importance of preserving environment are the major contributors to the recycling project. The important of community contribution was well summarized by PJCC leader that "recycling is bringing a lot, provided the public bring goods to us. If they stop bring it in, we have no work, so we will close it up." He added that most of the things sent to them sometimes are not sorted and separated. Therefore, they need to put extra effort in sorting them.

The difference between PJCC and RTFI at Datuk Harun with DJCC or TMJCC is that they do not grant any incentive to recyclers, but people's contribution are more on voluntary basis. On the other hand, DJCC and TMJCC rewarded their recyclers with money incentive once they bring and drop their recyclable materials/items at the centre. Informant from TMJCC stated that they do offer money incentives to the public. He mentioned that, "in 2006, we promised them to give incentive, in term of weight per kg. For example, 1kg of paper for 15 cents. After all, the activity is to create a better awareness, and more and more residents are willing to donate the items. They don't want the incentive." As commented by DJCC informant, "Most of the older generation are more generous and appreciate recycling as long as there is a place for them to bring their things. But, young generation brings recyclable materials because they want the money incentive." However, not all community members are concerned about recycling. One informant responds that, "Some say lazy, no time, some just put items outside their house."

Besides public participation, another important factor that contributes to the sustainability of the recycling project is the commitment and support of the committee members. According to PJCC informant, the commitment from the members is good and they always invite their friends and neighborhood to bring all kinds of things to the centre. One informant states that, "almost every week the committed member come. They are very committed. Every week we see them." However, one of the challenges is to retain the volunteer committee members. This scenario is quite true if the argument by Flat RT Datuk Harun leader is put into consideration. He reported that, "in the beginning, everyone is energetic. As usual when something is new, everybody feel committed, but to retain it is something that very difficult." DJCC also facing the same situations, when the sub-committee which was started with big group about 10 to 12 people

who come in a day, but the number has reduced to 5 to 6 persons.

### **Member appreciation and motivation**

Since this project is a voluntary basis, some do all these not for the reward, as they still believe that it is good if they can also generate some income to support organization activities. One of the informants states that "the money, either we make money or not, we are doing as part of the community project. Of course, we have to make money also for association to run activities." However, to keep the recycling momentum among the members, some kind of appreciations are given as token for their whole morning sweat, even though the members are not asking for it. For instance, two community-based projects (DJCRC and TMJCC) do provide free lunch after three to four hours of hard work. As one informant highlighted, "We don't pay any salary to them, but we promise every second and forth Sunday they come, we provide them with a basic lunch and drinking water". On the other hand, the oldest community-based project leader provides monetary incentive and says that "They come and do work; we pay a token some, say about RM5 hourly. That's all we give."

Generally, all of the community-based projects organized trips for their members together with community members. Some yearly trips were planned for relaxation, but some did not. This is because the trip is part of their motivational and educational tour objective. For instance, one informant stated that he organized a nature tour with the intention of enhancing teamwork and cooperation among the members. He added that "during the trip, we in cooperate a talk on environment, a talk on recycling, visit to organic fertilizer farm, and get farmers to talk to our volunteers." Besides, they also appreciated their members' contribution by including them in an annual dinner functions, family day, and other neighborhood programmes.

### **Communication**

Creating awareness and getting a positive response is not possible without concerted communication effort to educate, convince, encourage and make them feel personally involved with the issue and committed in recycling participation. Various efforts are used to stimulate and promote environmental-friendly behaviour. Disseminating information is necessary to ensure the sustainability of this community based projects. Among the approaches used are word-of-mouth, newsletter, flyers, media publicity, key leaders speech, dramas, video presentation, notices, exhibitions, banner and functions or events. For example, the information is made available to all through word of-mouth and special

pages of recycling activities in association's newsletter.

Besides disseminating information, getting the public response is also important. As one of the informants argued, "of course the awareness of the public is very important. So I organize activities to create the awareness. I even organized a drama, with the theme to build a cleaner Taman Mayang Jaya. I personally wrote the script and it was performed by volunteer during the dinner." According to DJCC informant, the awareness is there, and because of their attitude, they are not interested enough to find out the information in the newsletter circulated to them. In order to have better community participation, more initiatives are needed to promote recycling. As one informant suggested "during the Pesta Tanglung (Lantern Festival) under residents association activity, I projected all the video and give flyers about recycling." It seems that an integrated approach is important to maintain public awareness and participation mainly in recycling related activities.

### **Uncommon Values and PD Practices**

#### **Age Strength**

PJCC recycling activity is handled by veteran members with an average of 60 years old. They are the one who manage and run the recycling centre for more than 14 years since 1996. It is no doubt that this group has successfully maintained and sustained the recycling project until today. This is one of the possible reasons that PJCC is currently facing some constrain to find for younger successor. It might be true if the statement by PJCC leader is considered. He personally appealed and stated that, "I want more people to come and take over, look into it. Someone younger and want to do this kind of work."

This situation is slightly different with recycling community-based project under TMJCC which consists of mixed groups as young as 12 years old and the oldest is 65 years old. The other two community based organizations, for the time being, do not face any problem with the succession since their members are much younger which an average of 50 years old as compared to PJCC group members. Some may argue that older persons could improve their quality of life by taking parts in various social and development activities. Although, older people have more time, knowledge, experience and energy, they are the valuable under-utilized resources. One good example is PJCC project leader, who stated that, "As a retired government servant, I don't know what to do and sitting at home, but somebody has invited me to come and do this thing. I have to take over from the founder after she passed away, thank her for initiative to form this." In other words, the formation of this project actually provides activity and opportunity for veterans to

utilize their time accordingly.

### Gender Strength

Two community-based projects show the dominant role of women in recycling activities. DJRC is managed and run by female voluntary workforces as compared to TMJCC, which have balance between male and female. However, the other community based-project is slightly unique as compared to other three because this is the only community-based organization in Petaling Jaya that makes and commercializes handicrafts from recyclable materials. This activity is organized under the *Jiran Wanita* (Women Neighborhood) sub-committee of RT Flat Datuk Harun. In addition, they have two members who are capable of transforming newspaper and magazine into different types of handicraft creatively and innovatively. Their efforts have successfully generated income for organization and each year they generate about RM3000 to RM4000 from the sale of these handicrafts. They also actively participate in any exhibition where they promote and market their handicraft products.

### Communication Initiative

Different community-based projects apply different promotional approaches in enhancing their recycling activities. For instance, TMJCC produces its own video on recycling and projects it during exhibition, and annual dinner functions. Besides, they also perform drama to educate community on recycling. Most importantly, they managed to come up with their own drama's script and theme song for a better neighborhood environment. All of these initiatives are vital which the TMJCC leader believed that with more activities organized inclusive of recycling project, it would mean that the residents come more often. In this case, they have a better chance to interact, to talk; to explain, and even provides community with more information about recycling.

### Club as communication platform to promote recycling and get volunteer

All community-based projects utilize their social club or *Warga Usia Emas* (Golden Age Citizen) as a communication platform to encourage their participation in recycling or even become a voluntary committee member. Informant from DJCRC stated that, "at our main centre (RA building), we have dancing and Mandarin classes. I will inform them about recycling activities. That is why many of them bring their things in every class and put it in my car." On the other hand, TMJ Citizen Club which is open to all residents who are above 50 years old

has become a channel to recruit volunteers and as the TMJCC informant said, "they come and join the club activity then we in cooperate creation of awareness on recycling into the activity. With better awareness they are willing to come and help us." Another good example of golden age citizen participations is under RT Flat Datuk Harun. They are involved in kitchen waste composting, which produces fertilizer for plants under the 'orchard in the park' concept, embraced by this community since 2006.

### Flea market and book sale

Generally, all recyclable materials or items will be sold directly to the recycle company. However, two community-based projects have taken the initiative to put on sale their recyclable items as part of their recycling activity. For instance, PJCC sell the recyclable items from toys to costumes, jewellery to clothes donated by the public and books at Sunday flea market in Amcorp Mall and The Atria Shopping Centre. According to PJCC informant, most of the good items collected will be sent there for sale. PJCC is the only currently active in the sale of quality and recyclable items in the flea market. TMJCC has initiated the sale of second-hand books. In this case, all second-hand books will be displayed at exhibitions to encourage residents to buy, read and passed around until the book is unreadable. Only then it will be sent for recycling.

### CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, only active community-based projects would be able to sustain and be successful in carrying out environmentally friendly practices. The degrees of their activeness very much depend on the qualities and values that embedded in the community-based projects. Despite the common qualities and practices in the community based-project approaches, there are also uncommon practices which are important to further enhance their establishment, sustainability and making recycling activity more interesting and diversified. Besides the common qualities and practices, these uncommon practices are the PD that actually can be imitated by others to help them maintain their existence towards a more sustainable environmental behaviour.

Basically, the sustainability of the community-based project is determined by a few key factors such as leadership, networking, cooperation, communication, activeness, and the most important is PD practice. This is because despite being active in recycling, the PD practices will further strengthen their establishment and with those qualities and values they have, there is no doubt that these community-based projects also deserved recognition. All these community-based organizations



which have embrace recycling as part of their major activity do not find it easy to maintain and sustain without having the qualities and PD practices mention above. The recognitions given to them are proof that community-based approaches are able to contribute towards a sustainable environmental behaviour. For community based-project to success, it always demands voluntary and highly dedicated and committed person, which transpired in the common and uncommon values and practice of this paper. Recognition and reward are only part of the satisfaction and achievement, but long-term contribution to the conservation of environment is more important.

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