Reviewer's report

Title: Perception of Masculinity among Malaysian Young Men: a qualitative study of university students

Version: 2 Date: 4 September 2013

Reviewer: Seng Fah Tong

Reviewer's report:

I see substantial improvement in the manuscript and now it is more comprehensible, in particular the methods and results section. The research question is interesting and clear. However, the following points should be reconsidered –especially the points in major compulsory revisions.

- Major Compulsory Revisions

Theoretical basis of the study is introduced in the revised version. However, it is more appropriate to include the discussion of such theories in relation to the findings in the “discussion” section. Hence, the authors should discuss their findings in relation to the social construction of masculinities and sexual script theory.

Methods

The constructivist position adopted by the researchers is best portrayed in the methods section, rather than mentioning it without demonstrating how it was put in use. If such position is adopted, then, the methods section should include

1. How researchers introduce her/himself to the participants –as their mere present or how they presented in the IDI shapes (and influence) the findings. The relationship between the interviewers and the participants affects the findings.
2. Who were the interviewers and what was their professional training? Their professional background gives the audience a picture of how the findings were constructed or conceived.

The used of the term “emerged” contradicts the constructivist position. Rather, the appropriate term include “derived”, “understood”, “noted”.

Or else, the authors may choose to not to mention constructivist position, and describe what was done –which to me, they portrayed an objectivist position.

The other sections in the methods are well described.

The results were presented in a systematic manner.
The discussion

I take note of drastic change in the discussion.

Important points that the author should clarify:

1. “This study shows that university men have conceptualized traditional masculinity norms before entering university.” – I have trouble relating the findings to this conclusion. The authors may want to include some result supporting such statement.

2. How does this concept of masculinities relate to the need of university providing “possibilities for expressing all range of masculinities, beyond privilege and prejudgment, to let students improve their skills and confidence for a more productive life”

3. Also, I have difficulty in relating the concept of “being respected” and the need of “the educators to facilitate and encourage the involvement of all students in campus events in order to express their competence and leadership in social activities”

4. Why the university should have educational programs after understanding how university’s students define masculinities?

Rather, the authors should discuss the findings in relation to how other countries define masculinities? How much differences in the definition of masculinities between Malaysian students compare to western counterpart. And, how would this meaning of masculinities among university’s students differ with other age groups. How would these findings differ or have similarity with other part of the world? I see similitude with the ASEAN Male, but no comment was made.

How theory is being used? How did the theory illuminate the study?

In the conclusion:

Does facilitating the expression of masculinities lead to better life skills and productive opportunities?

- Minor Essential Revisions

page 9: “(core categories)” is unnecessary

- Discretionary Revisions

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Level of interest

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- An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English
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- Acceptable

Statistical review
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- No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests
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I declare that I have no competing interests

What next?
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- Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**
'I declare that I have no competing interests'