

**ENGLISH TEACHER EDUCATION IN MALAYSIAN TERTIARY  
INSTITUTIONS: ALIGNING TQM TO THE DETERMINANTS OF  
QUALITY**

**by**

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**Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements**

**for the degree of**

**Doctor of Philosophy**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at USM or other institutions.

Jinan Hatem Issa

Signature .....

Date: .....

## **DEDICATION**

This work is sincerely dedicated to our Almighty Allah

My beloved husband, Firas

The soul of my father, Hatem

My lovely parents, Fadhilah and Jalal

My family

My school

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

TQM	Total Quality Management
ELT	English Language Teaching
MWTC	Malay Women's Teacher Training College
MELTA	Malaysian English Language Teachers' Association
ICT	Information Communications Technologies
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
CELTA	Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults
ESL	English as a Second Language
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EFQM	The European Foundation Quality Model
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
CPD	Continuing Professional development
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
MQA	Malaysian Qualifications Agency
OBC	Outcome Based Education

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# **PENDIDIKAN GURU BAHASA INGGERIS DI INSTITUSI PENDIDIKAN TINGGI DI MALAYSIA: PENJAJARAN TQM KEPADA PENENTU KUALITI**

## **ABSTRAK**

Kualiti adalah matlamat utama yang berusaha dicapai oleh pengurusan sesebuah organisasi dalam prestasi mereka setiap hari. Sebagaimana program pendidikan lain, program pendidikan guru bahasa Inggeris sepatutnya bercirikan kualiti. Kualiti pendidikan guru bahasa Inggeris adalah kritikal dan merupakan suatu fokus daripada profesion pengajaran bahasa Inggeris. Justeru, kajian ini berusaha membangun pemahaman tentang bidang ELT di institusi pengajian tinggi di Malaysia. Kajian ini menunjukkan bukti dan mencadangkan garis panduan tentang kepentingan kualiti dalam program pendidikan guru bahasa Inggeris, dengan meneliti sama ada prinsip teras Pengurusan Kualiti Menyeluruh (Total Quality Management, TQM) boleh mendorong peningkatan kualiti pendidikan guru bahasa Inggeris melalui pengukuran petunjuk daripada empat bentuk modal (intelektual, kewangan, kerohaniah, dan sosial) sebagai penentu kualiti. Kajian kes eksploratori dijalankan dengan menggunakan teknik pensampelan bertujuan. Seramai 69 orang ketua dan pensyarah daripada program pendidikan guru bahasa Inggeris di lima buah institusi pengajian tinggi awam utama di Malaysia menyertai kajian ini, dan melengkapkan dua soal selidik tentang penentu kualiti dan pelaksanaan TQM yang berkesan. Dapatan menekankan fokus terhadap penambahbaikan kualiti program pendidikan guru bahasa Inggeris melalui pemilihan staf yang berkebolehan dalam menyampaikan wawasan dan misi tentang program kualiti pendidikan guru bahasa Inggeris. Di samping itu, kecemerlangan dalam penyelidikan, penerbitan dan kerja-kerja komuniti sepatutnya mencirikan program kualiti. Dapatan menunjukkan petunjuk tertinggi dan terendah bagi setiap bentuk modal. Tambahan pula, keutamaan daripada penentu kualiti juga dikenal pasti. Sebagai tambahan, beberapa

korelasi positif yang signifikan dilaporkan dalam kalangan empat bentuk modal, dari satu sudut, dan dengan prinsip teras TQM, dari sudut yang lain. Selanjutnya, latihan yang berterusan merupakan prinsip teras utama yang perlu dipatuhi oleh pengurusan tertinggi dan komitmen kepimpinan untuk menjana program kualiti pendidikan guru bahasa Inggeris di institusi pengajian tinggi di Malaysia. Dapatan seterusnya menunjukkan bahawa secara statistik, terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan dalam kalangan pensyarah bahasa Inggeris dari segi gred akademik mereka bagi keempat-empat bentuk modal. Dapatan daripada temu bual separa struktur dengan 12 orang ahli akademik dari empat buah institusi pendidikan tinggi di Malaysia, juga menekankan kepentingan pelaksanaan TQM dan peningkatan penentu kualiti. Keputusan ini menunjukkan bahawa staf akademik sepatutnya sentiasa berusaha untuk berubah, menyesuaikan diri serta belajar untuk lebih maju. Yang paling penting, para eksekutif dalam program pendidikan guru bahasa Inggeris di institusi pendidikan tinggi di Malaysia sepatutnya bersikap memimpin, bukan sekadar menurut, dalam pembangunan program kualiti. Akhir sekali, kajian ini mencadangkan sumbangan asas terhadap badan-badan ilmu dan juga sebagai kesimpulan utama.

# **ENGLISH TEACHER EDUCATION IN MALAYSIAN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS: ALIGNING TQM TO THE DETERMINANTS OF QUALITY**

## **ABSTRACT**

Quality is the leading goal that organisation's management strives for accomplishing in its everyday performances. English teacher education programs should be, like any other educational programs, featured with quality. The quality of English teacher education is critical and a focus of the English Teaching profession. Hence, this study seeks to develop the understanding regarding this particular area of ELT in Malaysian tertiary institutions. This study demonstrates evidences and suggests guidelines on the importance of delivering quality English teacher education programs through exploring whether the embedding of Total Quality Management core principles may lead to produce quality English teacher education via measuring the indicators of four forms of capital (intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social) as determinants of quality. An exploratory case study was carried out using a purposive sampling technique. Sixty-nine heads and lecturers of English teacher education programs, at five major public Malaysian tertiary institutions, completed two questionnaires on the determinants of quality and the effective implementation of TQM. The finding sustained a focus on improving the quality of English teacher education programs through selecting high quality staff being capable of and devoted to addressing the visions and missions of quality English language teacher education programs. Besides, excelling in research, publications and community work should feature the quality programs. The findings indicated the highest and lowest indicators of each of the four forms of capital. Moreover, the top priorities of the determinants of quality were identified. Additionally,

some significant positive correlations were reported among the four forms of capital, on one hand, and with TQM core principles, on the other hand. Furthermore, the on-going training was found to be the most predictor core principle followed by top management and leadership commitment to produce quality English teacher education programs at Malaysian tertiary institutions. A further finding revealed statistically significant differences among English lecturers in terms of their academic grades for the four forms of capital. The findings of the semi-structured interviews with 12 academics, at four Malaysian tertiary institutions, furthered the challenges encountering the TQM implementation as well as the enhancement of the determinants of quality. These results demonstrated that academic staff should continuously change, adapt, and learn not to get left behind. Most importantly, executives in English teacher education programs at Malaysian tertiary institutions should lead, rather than follow, in the development of quality programs. Finally, the study reported the fundamental contributions to the knowledge bodies as well as the key conclusions.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Even though English Language Teaching (ELT) is an enormous field that is evident in the literature (Ballesteros, 2010), English language teacher education, as one of its areas, has not been researched adequately and properly (Wardman, 2009). In the same respect, Beaumont (2004, p. 10) states that *'English language teacher education to speakers of other languages has taken a backseat to other aspects of English language teaching and research'*. Likewise, Wardman (2009, p.2) indicates that language people whether *'learners, teachers or researchers'* ought to promote and encourage studies on English language teacher education.

Research about English language teacher education is important in itself especially after today's world has entered into the globalisation era, including education like all the other aspects of life, and the migration phenomena, of learners whether from communities or countries to others, which offer sufficient reasons for the educationists' concerns (Mukhopadhyay, 2002). Besides, quick technological developments in communication technologies are changing the nature of the know-how, skills, and knowledge of beings. As a result, global demands necessitate a quality worker, one with competencies, attitudes, and intellectual agility beneficial to critical thinking within a rapidly changing environment (Bontis, 2002). Undoubtedly, altering the way education is delivered, such as online education from face-to-face as well as the



alterations occurred to the nature of learners and structures of the educational organisations introduced the notion of quality as a basic characteristic of the educational practices.

In a world brands by a revolution of quality demands in all life sectors, including education, the need has appeared to embed quality approaches in its organisations to ensure attaining fruitful accomplishments. Indeed, a higher degree of interaction, complexity, divergence, and customisations label the higher education sector compared to others (Zailani, Othman, & Yen, 2007). Therefore, the Malaysian higher educational institutions has launched, and in response to the Malaysian Ministry of Education's recommendations in 1996, a campaign to implement Total Quality Management (TQM) approach in the teaching and learning processes. As a result, only a few studies were carried out to document the embedding process, one of which was a master's project by Puan Mariam Ahmed (1997) to examine the implementation of TQM on the academic performance of the teacher trainees in one of the teacher training colleges in Malaysia called '*Malay Women's Teacher Training College*' (MWTC) tackling the impacts on different aspects: the lecturers, the curriculum and co curriculum activities. The results exhibited highly positive impacts for TQM in training teachers. Hence, the need is highlighted to conduct studies to examine, evaluate, and improve the implementation of TQM in the Malaysian educational institutions (Othman & Abdullah, 2007).

The substantial weight, that a quality teacher has, is accentuated in McKinsey's report (2007) when describing a quality teacher as the chief driving force capable of making changes and transformation, which is apparent in the statement '*the quality of an*

*education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers*'. Caldwell and Harris (2008) in their book entitled '*Why not the best schools?*' identify certain indicators to measure the quality of any education system via assessing its four forms of capital (intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social) as determinants of quality teacher education. In other words, when the indicators of each form of capital are high; this indicates the quality of that system and vice versa. Therefore, a quality teacher refers to a teacher with high indicators of four forms of capital: intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social. Basically, producing quality pre-service English language teachers represents the driving force capable of making the educational process a success when commencing their teaching journey. Accordingly, this study attempts to explore whether the embedding of TQM core principles may lead to produce quality English language teacher education via measuring the indicators of four forms of capital as determinants of quality English teacher education since this topic has not been researched before whether locally or internationally.

Henceforth, this chapter illustrates the background of the study and statement of the problem related to exploring the quality of English teacher education through the indicators of four forms of capital via employing the TQM core principles. It also clarifies the aim and objectives of the study, research questions and hypotheses, rationale and significance of the study. Moreover, it identifies the study limits and conceptual and operational definitions of key terms. Additionally, this chapter introduces the conceptual framework for this study. The last section of this chapter outlines the organisation of the other chapters.

## **1.2 Background of the Study**

This section of the thesis tackles the background of study under two sub headings: issues of quality English teacher education in Malaysia, and Total Quality Management in Malaysia and the determinants of quality.

### ***1.2.1 Issues of Quality in English Teacher Education in Malaysia***

As it is known, Malaysia has achieved rapid progress, especially in attracting foreign students to study at its higher educational institutions (Kanji & Tambi, 2000). Consequently, an urgent need has appeared to acquire the English language for academic purposes as a pre-requisite to be able to pursue the higher studies to excel in everyday life. For this reason, most of the well-reputed language centres for teaching English are demanding quality teachers of English to be eligible to enter the test for the vacancy (Sallı-Çopur, 2008). Thus, the focus of the program of study for English language teacher education should be extended from just providing teachers of English for schools to producing quality English teachers who are able to meet the demands of the current situation.

In Malaysia, the quality of the teaching profession, including English teacher education, is undoubtedly considered as a key element in accomplishing the country's educational objectives and teachers definitely do an essential task in addressing the impacts and challenges of globalisation encountered by that country (Mokshein, Ahmad, & Vongalis-Macrow, 2009). Hence, developing the human capital and improving the quality of education are the educational aims that Malaysia seeks to accomplish as the vital role the teaching profession plays. This could be clearly seen in the steps that the

Malaysian government has taken in its attempts to enhance the quality of teachers via employing highly qualified people and improving the remuneration system of the teaching profession (Jamil, Abd Razak, Ahmad, & Jinan, 2010). Fundamentally, the Malaysian teacher education philosophy, which is formulated in 1982, has been translated in principle to the teacher curriculum (Jamil et al., 2010) to develop a balanced, trained, and skilled persons (Rajendran et al., 2008).

According to the Malaysian English Language Teachers' Association official website (MELTA), this topic of exploring the quality of English language teacher education has not been the focus of scholars, which is evident in the other topics tackled: building vocabularies, the utilised learning styles, the use of Information Communications Technologies (ICT) in the educational processes, and the proficiency of learners through the four forms of skills (Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking) (MELTA, 2011). Besides, Al-Tamimi and Shuib (2009) investigate Universiti Sains Malaysia English majors' learning styles but few on the quality of English language teacher education particularly on the tertiary level. In fact, there are some government bodies under the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) responsible for measuring the quality issues at the tertiary level such as the Malaysian Qualification Agency (MQA) or Quality Unit (QU) in the universities or Outcome Based Education (OBC) (MOHE, 2013).

The quality of teacher education including English teacher education, as one of its area, has recently attracted all the attention and focus of Ministry of Education in Malaysia. This focus was translated in issuing the Malaysian Educational Blueprint (MOE, 2012)

as a development plan 2013-2025 aiming at improving the quality of education in Malaysia including teacher education to be featured like the education in developed countries. Therefore, this study came in accordance with this plan. Chapman (2009) cited that Malaysia's Vision 2020 aims to convert the country to be knowledge-based, evolving into an entirely developed nation (Kamogawa, 2003). Hence, the Malaysian government's efforts to improve the quality of teacher education inspired this study to be the first corner stone in exploring the quality of English teacher education programs delivered at major public Malaysian tertiary institutions.

### ***1.2.2 Total Quality Management in Malaysia and the Determinants of Quality***

In the Malaysian education system, there have been several programs for the continuous improvement of teacher education within the general reform movement (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2006). One of these is the adoption of Total Quality Management (TQM) by higher educational institutions like in several other countries including the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand (Kanji & Tambi, 2000). About two decades ago, TQM was implemented in the Malaysian higher educational institutions, especially the public tertiary institutions, in response to the recommendations of Ministry of Education (MOE) in 1996 that TQM ought to be implemented by tertiary institutions at all levels (Othman & Abdullah, 2007). Nonetheless, not much is published on the progress of TQM implementation in such institutions (Kanji & Tambi, 2000; Zailani, Othman, & Yen, 2007). Therefore, scholars such as Feng and Aida (2009) emphasise the need for research in order to gain better

understanding of the subject matter as this topic has not been extensively studied both in educational studies as well as quality management research (Zailani, et al., 2007).

Therefore, this study targets to fill that void and develop the understanding in this relevant area through exploring whether the utilisation of TQM core principles can lead to the production of quality English language teacher education via assessing the indicators of four forms of capital (intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social) as determinants of quality education system (Caldwell & Spinks, 2008; Caldwell & Harris, 2008). Hence, spent efforts towards attaining this aim may assist the Malaysian government to realise its objective in turning the country into an enlightening and scholastic spot in the region. In other words, although English teacher education has not been examined via the TQM framework lens, this study seeks to measure the indicators of four forms of capital as the determinants of quality English teacher education.

In terms of quality, the output of the educational process does not meet the demands of living circumstances in a world marked by competing in quality (Jamil, et al., 2010).

After the end of the Second World War, many former colonial countries gained independence and commenced building to improve and develop the relevant sectors. However, they ignored the quality part focusing on quantity instead and hence the problem was produced in most of the countries generally as well as the underdeveloped and developing countries particularly. Therefore, there exists a persistent need to institute a holistic system of quality, which can be applicable to all sectors, including education. Total Quality Management (TQM) offers such a solution to all sectors (Deming, 2000, 2002; Juran, 1989). Therefore, this study seeks to be the first in

exploring the quality of English language teacher education through employing two approaches: TQM and Alignment model.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

Owing to the position of English language as a global language and in spite of the upheaval of the last few years, more people than ever yearn for learning English. Hence, the 21<sup>st</sup> century is labelled by an ever-increasing number of English learners who are at different ages and do variant jobs (Graddol, 2006). However, there is a shortage of research on the subject of English teacher education generally (Beaumont, 2004; Crookes, 2003; Wardman, 2009) and the quality of English teacher education particularly.

For Malaysia, higher educational institutions have pursued the TQM approach in response to the Ministry of Education's recommendations in 1996 for elevating the standards of education services provided and making the country a centre of excellence in this relevant sector (Feng & Aida, 2009; Kanji & Tambi, 2000; Zailani, et al., 2007). However, several scholars document the lack of studies regarding the progress of TQM practices in the Malaysian educational institutions (Feng & Aida, 2009; Kanji & Tambi, 2000; Zailani, et al., 2007; Zainal & Zuraidah, 2000).

Essentially, the Alignment Model assists in assessing the quality of any education system via measuring the indicators of four forms of capital (intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social) to stand on the degree of quality of that system. In other words,

when the indicators of the four forms of capital are high, this reflects the quality of performance for that system because the quality of teacher education determines the quality of that system (Barber & Mourshed, 2007). Thus, this study intends to explore the quality of English teacher education via measuring the indicators of four forms of capital as determinants of quality. Simultaneously, this study seeks to explore whether the embedding of TQM approach leads to enhance these determinants. As mentioned earlier, this study occurred in harmony with MOE's development plan 2013-2025 to turn the education system to be totally featured of quality, including English teacher education (MOE, 2012).

To summarise, a review of the current literature has recognised some blank spots (i.e. shortcomings of research) and blind spots (i.e. overlooked areas) within the ELT (i.e. English language teaching) area. The blank spots are represented in the accessibly limited number of studies regarding the implementation of TQM and its progress in the Malaysian higher educational institutions especially in English teacher education, whilst the blind spots are represented in the shortage of literature regarding quality English teacher education and the usage of indicators of four forms of capital as determinants of quality (Harris, 2010b). Henceforth, this study seeks to develop the understanding regarding the quality of English teacher education. In addition, it represents an innovation through adding new knowledge about the relevant field of ELT.



#### **1.4 The Research Aim and Objectives**

The overarching aim of this research is to explore whether the embedding of TQM core principles may lead to produce quality English language teacher education via measuring the indicators of four forms of capital as determinants of quality. Hence, this research seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- I. To determine the highest and lowest indicators of the four forms of capital: intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social capital of English language teacher education programs in terms of importance and performance by key stakeholders.
- II. To identify the top priorities for the four forms of capital: intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social capital of English language teacher education programs by key stakeholders.
- III. To assess the most critical TQM core principles in English language teacher education programs in Malaysian public institutions. The TQM core principles encompassed in this research were: top management and leadership commitment; continuous improvement; empowerment and total involvement; training and development; and policy and strategic planning.
- IV. To examine the relationships among the four forms of capital: intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social capital of English language teacher education programs.
- V. To examine the relationship between TQM implementation and the aligned forms of capital encompassing: intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social capital of English language teacher education programs by key stakeholders.

- VI. To investigate whether there are any differences among lecturers in terms of their academic grade towards the four forms of capital: intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social capital of English language teacher education programs by key stakeholders.
- VII. To explore and identify the main challenges encountering the implementation of TQM in English language teacher education programs by key stakeholders.
- VIII. To explore and identify the main challenges in strengthening the four forms of capital: intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social capital of English language teacher education programs by key stakeholders.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

This research endeavours to address the following questions:

- I. What are the highest and lowest indicators of the four forms of capital: intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social capital of English language teacher education programs in terms of importance and performance by key stakeholders?
- II. What are the top priorities of the four forms of capital: intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social capital of English language teacher education programs by key stakeholders?
- III. Which quality core principle is most critical for the effective implementation of TQM in English language teacher education programs by key stakeholders?

- IV. Are there any significant relationships among the four forms of capital: intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social capital of English language teacher education programs by key stakeholders?
- V. Is there any significant relationship between TQM implementation and the aligned forms of capital encompassing: intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social capital of English language teacher education programs by key stakeholders?
- VI. Are there any significant differences among lecturers in terms of their academic grade towards the four forms of capital: intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social capital of English language teacher education programs by key stakeholders?
- VII. What are the main challenges encountering the implementation of TQM in English language teacher education programs by key stakeholders?
- VIII. What are the main challenges in strengthening the four forms of capital: intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social capital of English language teacher education programs by key stakeholders?

### **1.6 Research Hypotheses**

Based on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> research questions of this study, inferential statistics were employed to answer them. Therefore, the need for formulating hypotheses was a must. As a result, below are the hypotheses that were tested at the significance levels of 0.05 ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) and 0.01 ( $\alpha = 0.01$ ) with their related research questions:

<p>III. <i>Which quality core principle is most critical for the effective implementation of TQM in English language teacher education by key stakeholders?</i></p> <p><b>H<sub>0</sub>1: TQM core principles are not significant predictors to quality English language teacher education.</b></p>
<p>IV. <i>Are there any significant correlations among the four forms of capital: intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social capital of English language teacher education by key stakeholders?</i></p> <p><b>H<sub>0</sub>2: There are no significant correlations among the four forms of capital: intellectual, financial, social, and spiritual capital of English language teacher education.</b></p>
<p>V. <i>Is there any significant correlation between TQM implementation and the aligned forms of capital encompassing: intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social capital of English language teacher education by key stakeholders?</i></p> <p><b>H<sub>0</sub>3: There is no significant correlation between TQM implementation and the aligned forms of capital encompassing: intellectual, financial, social, and spiritual capital of English language teacher education.</b></p>
<p>VI. <i>Are there any significant differences among lecturers in terms of their academic grade towards the four forms of capital: intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social capital of English language teacher education by key stakeholders?</i></p> <p><b>H<sub>0</sub>4: There are no significant differences among lecturers in terms of their academic grade towards the four forms of capital: intellectual, financial, social, and spiritual capital of English language teacher education.</b></p>

## 1.7 Research Rationale

Prior to the absence of accessible research, in recent times, regarding quality pre-service English language teacher education, the need to carry out noteworthy and valid studies in this particular area of ELT has been raised by some scholars (Beaumont, 2004; Crookes, 2003; Wardman, 2009). In light of the fact that teaching English language is a rewarding and enjoyable activity assists in opening the doors for

recruitment all over the world, the lack of literature regarding this specific subject matter is unanticipated (Wardman, 2010).

On the other hand, there are limited studies regarding the embedding of TQM approach in the Malaysian higher education sector and its progress as noted by some researchers (Feng & Aida, 2009; Kanji & Tambi, 2000; Zainal & Zuraidah, 2000; Zailani, et al., 2007). Owing to the fact that TQM as a management philosophy aims at improving the functions of all departments of an organisation in order to produce a quality product or service. Moreover, the indicators of the four forms of capital are determinants of quality of any education system (Caldwell & Harris, 2008) including teacher education (Harris, 2010b). Hence, the TQM approach is interrelated with the determinants of quality (i.e. the indicators of four forms of capital). As a result, this interrelation between the TQM approach and the determinants of quality (four forms of capital) of English language teacher education rationalises the study.

Essentially, this research focuses on the quality problem regarding pre-service English language teachers and their eligibility to be quality as proficient teachers in the well-reputed language centres and schools especially with the fact that teaching English language can be viewed as a service. Eventually, the process of teaching English language can be considered as an important and economical resource for the country since when quality pre-service English language teachers commence the teaching journey, they would definitely be the driving force behind the success of the educational process. As a result, schools' students or language centres' learners would be given the best and the need to hire native speakers would be gradually reduced.

After a few years the standards of English in Malaysia would improve and be on par with the standards in countries like Singapore for instance.

In fact, the flexibility that the framework of the Alignment Model offers, makes it easy to measure the indicators of the four forms of capital of English language teacher education as stated by Harris (2010b). Hence, this thesis came as a response to the call of scholars (Beaumont, 2004; Crookes, 2003; Wardman, 2009) in English language teaching area, to conduct constant studies, through investigating how the successful implementation of TQM core principles can lead to enhance the four forms of capital of pre-service English language teacher education. In other words, when the implementation of TQM core principles is a success; the intellectual, financial, social, and spiritual capital would undoubtedly be improved towards paving the way for producing quality English language teacher education.

To summarise, this study represents an empirical evidence of the academic body of knowledge on English language teacher education. Hence, it is the first study of its type to explore whether the embedding of TQM core principles can enhance the intellectual, financial, social, and spiritual capitals of English language teacher education.

## **1.8 Research Significance**

The significance of this research lies in enhancing the capacity of tertiary institutions to improve and implement effective and efficient education programs that contribute to achieve the best transformation of the community as a whole. The initiative is of

interest to those involved directly in education as collaborators in a mutual learning process, to members of organisations and institutions in partnership with education providers, to policy-makers and those who guide and support teaching and learning throughout the education system. It is especially relevant to those involved in the preparation of individuals for engagement in fields such as development and within sectors that aim to bring about personal and social change.

This study will improve the quality of English language teacher education through its findings, which constitute the corner stone that will influence other researchers, who are keen on this particular subject matter (i.e. the quality of English language teacher education), to conduct studies in order to enrich the knowledge in this area. Therefore, this empirical research can be fruitful to enhance the performance and reinforce the embedding of TQM core principles to elevate the degree of quality provided at major public Malaysian tertiary institutions. Additionally, when excellence characterises the educational processes; learners will be quality learners as well accordingly. Providing quality teachers who have the core TQM principles and four forms of capital (i.e. determinants of quality) of intellectuality, financially, sociality and spirituality built in; this will shorten the journey to accomplish quality in acquiring the English language, which is the language of instruction in many educational contexts and modern information and communications technologies. Consequently, the way will be paved for understanding other subjects.

Furthermore, this research will be beneficial not only to English language teacher education particularly, but also to the education processes (i.e. teaching and learning)

generally. Of course, scholars and intellectuals are pretty aware of the importance of English language especially for learners to surpass in their lives. Hence, the benefits of this research will cover the entire society since the sole target is to gain quality in English language teacher education.

Most importantly, this research gains significance from the fact that it represents a novelty by itself via utilising two models: The TQM and Alignment Model to craft quality English language teacher education. The Alignment model was used as a framework in an international collaborative project, which was conducted to find out the reason behind selecting some schools by PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) as the best ones in six countries: Australia (Victoria) China (Chongqing), England, Finland (Tampere), United States, and Wales. A similar project is being run in Malaysia, Hong Kong, Korea and Australia (Queensland). Simultaneously, the researcher would explore whether the implementation of TQM core principles can lead to improve the intellectual, financial, social, and spiritual capital of English language teacher education (i.e. determinants of quality) in order to ensure producing the best quality English language teacher education.

### **1.9 Limitations of the Study**

Owing to the nature of case studies where this study belongs, the results of the current study cannot be generalised. When conducting this study, several limitations occurred, which were enumerated below:



1. The respondents of the study were limited to 69 heads and lecturers of pre-service English language teacher education programs at 5 major public Malaysian tertiary institutions since they were the only ones who voluntarily accepted to take part in this study. Hence, this study did not cover the pre-service English language teacher education programs at the other 3 major public Malaysian tertiary institutions although all were addressed to participate in the study. It is admitted that the participation of the other 3 major public major Malaysian tertiary institutions could add another scope to the study in relation to generalisation.
2. The qualitative data was limited to only 12 heads and lecturers of pre-service English language teacher education programs at only 4 public Malaysian tertiary institutions because they were the only ones who accepted to be interviewed.
3. In spite of the fact that the student-teachers represent an important source of information to explore that quality of pre-service English language teacher education programs at some major public Malaysian tertiary institutions. Yet, the student-teachers were excluded from this study due to the panellists' recommendations during the proposal defence. As a result, a limitation was recorded to the current study to only the heads and lecturers of English language teacher education programs at 5 major public Malaysian tertiary institutions.
4. There was a lack of literature on the implementation of TQM and its progress in the Malaysian higher educational institutions especially in English language teacher education.

5. A limitation of literature was also recorded on quality English language teacher education at Malaysian public tertiary institutions and the usage of indicators of four forms of capital as determinants of quality; such literature is important to support the study results.

### **1.10 Conceptual and Operational Definitions of Key Terms**

This section demonstrates the conceptual definitions by some previous researchers as well as the operational definitions of some key terms as follows:

**Quality:** was defined by Crosby (1979) as '*conformance to requirements*'. Quality is operationally going to be defined as an essential and vital excellence degree that necessitates the accomplishment of worthy characteristics in order to offer superiority to a product and service.

**Quality management:** was defined by Battikha (2003) as '*a set of quality activities including prevention and evaluation concerned with making a product, process, or service*'. For the purpose of the study, quality management is operationally going to be defined as the degree of quality in all management practices to determine the embedding of quality.

**Total Quality Management:** TQM was defined by Sit, Ooi, Lin, and Chong (2009) as a set of regulations and principles being applied to all the aspects of an organisation that are synchronised to certify meeting the customer's needs. For the purpose of this study, TQM is operationally going to be defined as an approach aims at improving and enhancing the efficiency, effectiveness, efficacy, cohesiveness, flexibility and

competitiveness of an organisation such as any educational institution. TQM is a powerful tool to ensure accomplishing and sustaining quality education.

**The Alignment Model:** is a model that was initially proposed and presented by Caldwell and Spinks (2008) and utilised by Caldwell and Harris (2008) offering a framework of factors concerning how self-managing schools attain transformation via utilising and aligning governance and four forms of capital: intellectual, financial, social, and spiritual capital.

**Teacher education:** refers to the education and training provided to students' teachers before they have undertaken any teaching. During the teacher education program, the student-teachers will learn how to use their knowledge to formulate lesson plans to teach their class. They are given common topics include classroom management, lesson plans, and professional development. During the period of such education programs, a major focus is the practicum where the student- teacher is placed within a school setting (either elementary or senior) and shadows an experienced teacher. In addition, they will be given opportunities to develop skills through lesson plans, teaching lessons and classroom management.

**Intellectual capital:** was defined as *'the knowledge and skills of all of those who work in or for'* the school (Caldwell, 2008; Harris, 2010a). In this research, intellectual capital is operationally refers to the updated knowledge and skills of lecturers.

**Financial capital:** refers to *'the money available to support the school'* (Caldwell, 2008). In this research, financial capital is operationally refers to all the funds and resources accessible to the school.

**Spiritual capital:** is defined by Zohar and Marshall (2004, p. 21) as *'a wealth of meaning and values that can generate profit to be added to the wealth of the human spirit and to general human well-being'*. For the purpose of this study, spiritual capital operationally refers to the shared values towards life and the learning process held by English language lecturers.

**Social capital:** was defined by Caldwell and Harris (2008, p.59) as *'the strength of formal and informal partnerships and networks involving the school and all individuals, agencies, organisations and institutions that have the potential to support and be supported by the school'*. In this research, social capital operationally refers to the three broad types of relationships that the school have with all members of the community, business agencies, and knowledge bodies (i.e. other schools, faculties, institutions, and universities whether locally or internationally).

### **1.11 Conceptual Framework**

The theoretical base for this study was the corner stone from which drawing its conceptualised model became possible as the Invitational Educational theory by William W. Purkey targets to address the totality of the educational setting: social, physical, cognitive, spiritual, and emotional through making schools the most inviting spots. Simultaneously, The European Foundation Quality Model (EFQM) excellence model through its five enablers (leadership, people, policy and planning, partnerships and resources, and processes and services) and four kinds of results (people, customer, society, and key performances) can foretell the degree of proficiency of any system. Therefore, Total Quality Management as an approach to the educational development

has arisen in recent literature since it has attracted educators' attention. TQM aims at producing quality student- teachers that is in line with the Alignment Model as quality can be achieved when the four capitals (i.e. determinants of quality) of English language teacher education: intellectual, financial, spiritual, and social are improved and enhanced. Thus, the theoretical base for this study addresses the quality notion and emphasises on accomplishing the best performances in the educational processes (i.e. teaching and learning). Accordingly, exploring the degree of a system's quality and its effectiveness can be viewed through assessing the four forms of capital as determinants of quality.

Researching on TQM and the Alignment Model is vital and crucial in itself, but a more noteworthy task is to identify whether TQM implementation may lead to the enhancement of the four forms of capital of English language teacher education towards the personal and professional development of student-teachers.

To illustrate, the TQM core principles employed in this study are: top management and leadership commitment; continuous improvement; empowerment and total involvement; training and development; and policy and strategic planning. For the sake of this study, the five TQM core principles represent the independent variables (IVs), whilst the determinants of quality represented by the aligned four forms of capital stand for the dependent variables (DVs). Figure 1.1 depicts the proposed conceptualised framework for the study where the five core principles of TQM (IVs) are assumed to positively enhance and develop the four forms of capital (DVs) of pre-service English teacher education.

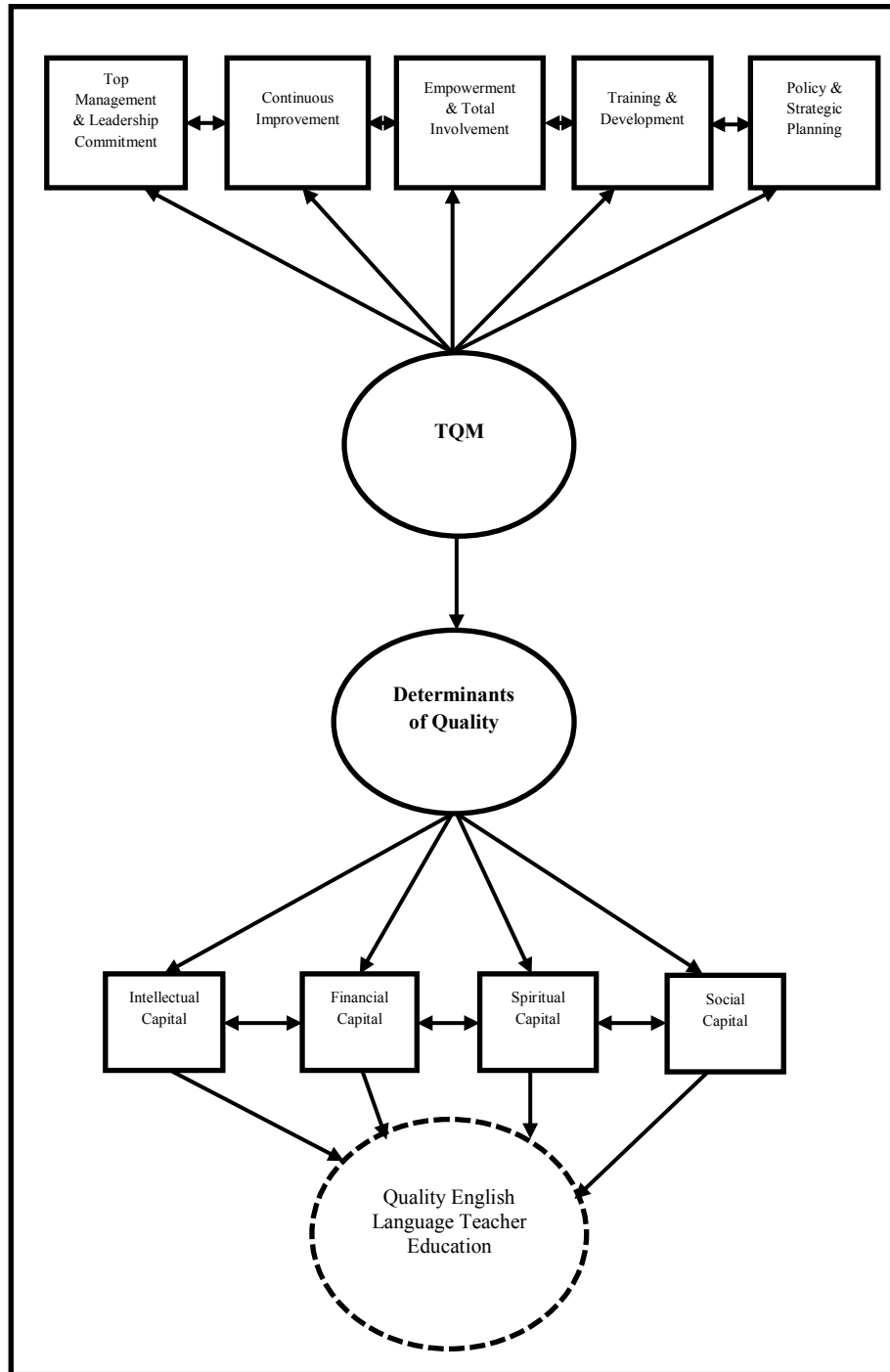


Figure 1.1 The Thesis Conceptualised Framework.

Furthermore, it is conceptualised that assumed relationships, on the one hand, exist among the four forms of capital. On the other hand, the anticipated relationships occur between the TQM core principles and the four forms of capital. As a result, the TQM

core principles indirectly influence the quality of English language teacher education, which is clarified in the dotted arrow in Figure 1.1. Accordingly, the surmised link is the foundation of the success of TQM and continuous quality improvement programs to produce quality English language teacher education.

To sum up, this study will work to attain how the successful deployment of TQM core principles can drive towards the realisation of the enhancement and improvement of English language teacher education intellectually, financially, spiritually, and socially. Both of the TQM and the determinants of quality will be covered in details in the next chapter.

### **1.12 Organisation of the Thesis**

This thesis relies on two models: the TQM and Alignment model. This study attempts to explore whether the embedding of TQM core principles may lead to produce quality English language teacher education via measuring the indicators of four forms of capital as determinants of quality teachers (Caldwell & Harris, 2008), especially in light of the fact that TQM, as a management approach, aims to improve the functions of all departments of an organisation to produce a quality product or service (i.e. high indicators of four forms of capital). Henceforth, the TQM approach is interrelated with the four forms of capital of English language teacher education and this study seeks to explore whether this interrelation leads to enhance the determinants of quality English language teacher education. The focus of this study is quite broad as well as the collected data from participants through employing a mixed method approach.