

## **Youth and Bridging Social Capital of Risk Multi-Ethnic Society in Pasir Gudang, Johor**

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30880/ahcs.2020.01.01.010>

Received 27 October 2020; Accepted 10 October 2020; Available online 02 Month 2020

**Abstract:** Social relationships among youth are essential as a basis for their social and emotional support. Social connections also enable young people to access resources owned by others for the survival of youth in today's challenging life. In the multi-ethnic country, connection with other ethnic may open wider opportunities to youth. Bridging social capital is seen as having the potential to grow the youth's potential by connecting youth with the wider community. Therefore, this article's purpose is to identify the bridging social capital among Pasir Gudang youth with a multi-ethnic society outside the Pasir Gudang community. This study applied a survey method through the distribution of a set of questionnaires to 400 youth (Malay 60%, Chinese 25%, and Indian 15%) in Pasir Gudang, Johor. The respondent is chosen by using a stratified sampling method according to their Rukun Tetangga association in the Pasir Gudang community. Results were derived from the analyzed distribution of the questionnaire using version 23 of SPSS. The result showed that the Indian youth in Pasir Gudang has more bridging social capital as well as the trust, cohesive and reciprocity elements.

**Keywords:** Bridging, Cross-Ethnic Relation, Social Capital, Risk Society, Youth

### **1. Introduction**

Social relations are a central point in human life that plays a very important role in human life (Olson, 2011). Closely related to human beings is the basis of human dependence and social support (Berkman, Glass, Brissette, & Seeman, 2000; Gifford-Smith & Brownell, 2003). Social relationships are also a source of social influence, the basis of identity formation, sense of identity and the creation of social comparison (Berkman et al., 2000). Also, social relationships enable us to access resources owned by others (Lin, 2001). Besides, social relationships are also an important tool for building a progressive united society (David, 2010; Varshney, 2002; Butler, 2019). To ensure the success and development of a country, it is important to ensure that social relations within the community are in good condition and close despite living in diversity (Lee, 2018).

The existence of high cross-ethnic social relations in society will ensure a safe future. Varshney (2002) found that groups with ties based on the elements stated could serve as a shield against the provocation of ethnicity by politicians and also to thwart efforts to divide ethnic communities. This is also agreed by Mansor (2012, 2017) who recognizes that when individuals in a community build relationships in social life with others ethnicities through daily relationships or associations can reduce ethnic boundaries.

Further, Butler (2019) details the study of cross-ethnic social relations among Australian youth. The selection of youths to see their social relations as they are the ones facing the current globalization and transformation of the country but at the same time have to live in the ethnic diversity that has inequities and has to compete for limited resources. Thus, findings from Australian youths show that multi-ethnic day-to-day relationships have helped young people use the differences and similarities between them to build relationships and identities openly and respect the ethnic differences (Wise & Noble, 2016).

In Malaysia, the cross ethnic relation are always in risk due the effect of British colonial era. The relationship between ethnicities in Malaysia, especially in the post-conflict era between Malay and Chinese (1945-1960), has provided the psychic effect that has led to the feeling of distance and distrust among them (Shamsul Amri Baharuddin, 2011). Such distant and distrustful feeling also contributed to the ethnic violence between Malays and Chinese on 13 May 1969. Besides, Teo (2019) also claimed that Malaysians have a trust deficit because there is no solidarity and support in Malaysia for one another. However, Malaysia is ranked at 16<sup>th</sup> most peaceful country in the world (BERNAMA, 2020). This show that the conflict or risk relation among ethnicities are segmented according to region, issues and individual approach.

Given the importance of good social relationships in society especially in cross-ethnic relations, various elements can be used to look at social relationships in society. One of the most frequently mentioned concepts for social relations is the concept of social capital. Social capital is often associated with social relations because it serves as the center of social relations (Reimer, Lyons, Ferguson, & Polanco, 2008). One of the forms of social capital is bridging social capital that can expand a community's potential to build cross-ethnic social relationships. Bridging social capital not only benefits the inner community but also opens up potential opportunities outside the community (Abdullah, 2013). Thus, the ability to open up greater opportunities for self-development can help youth access more resources for the sake of survival in today's complex transformation landscape.

## **2. Problem Statement**

Varshney (2010) found that if a community has a history of ethnic violence in the past and instability in its regional development governance, it would influence the social community ties of different ethnic groups in the country. At the same time, Varshney (2000;2010) also notes that, if the region's group has high cross-ethnic relations, they can prevent the ethnic conflict from being worst.

Reports by the media have shown that there have been ethnic tensions in the Pasir Gudang area in 2007 (Malaysiakini, 2007). There is a brawl between Malay and Indian youth who led the Malay and Indian communities in Pasir Gudang to have a bad prejudice when they meet each other. This situation has caused police to block the main road around Pasir Gudang. There were briefing sessions held by politicians and police chiefs to ease the tensions that had occurred in Pasir Gudang at that time. This shows that Pasir Gudang has a history of ethnic tensions which is one of the indicators that could trigger ethnic conflict in Pasir Gudang in the future.

This situation is worsened when 50% of the population in Pasir Gudang is B40, although Pasir Gudang is a concentrated area for heavy industrialization. Besides, in 2019, there are cases of environmental pollution in Pasir Gudang due to unsustainable environmental management. The inherent risk in Pasir Gudang will have an impact on ethnic conflict if there are no high cross-ethnic relations among the communities in Pasir Gudang. The risk has become more significant when it comes to youth

because of the process of identity formation that is still fragile and influenced by their environment (Garbarino, 1992; Jonnson, 2010; Olsson, 2011).

Pasir Gudang's precarious state of ethnic strife is a major question mark. The youth of the Pasir Gudang group will keep their peace from becoming strained while confronting circumstances that can lead to ethnic tension if they have strong cross-ethnic relations. Contrary to this, a lack of cross-ethnic social relations can cause ethnic conflict, as Varshney (2010) has reported. This study will address the research question of what is Pasir Gudang's cross-ethnic social relationship by measuring the bridging of social capital with trust, cohesive, and reciprocity dimension.

### 3. Methodology

This research applied a survey method to gather the primary data among youth in Pasir Gudang, Johor through the distribution of questionnaires. The selection of youth as a unit of study is essential to their position as the future heir to countries' growth. The survey approach by questionnaire is consistent with the concise mode of analysis to explain the current trend.

To assess the sample, a stratified sampling technique to the Rukun Tetangga's at Pasir Gudang was used. The Rukun Tetangga was randomly picked at the August 2019 Jom Ronda Programme. Just 45 out of 53 associations of Rukun Tetangga are present from the Jom Ronda event. That leaves only 45 Rukun Tetangga around Pasir Gudang participated. To evaluate the sample size in this analysis, G Power software can classify the sample size according to the variables (Hair et al, 2017). G Power defined the minimum sample size for a survey is 100 respondents. Yet the minimum sample size for survey method according to Locido et al (2006) is 200 respondents. In this sample, the total respondent from 45 Rukun Tetangga is 362 respondents, taking into account the suggestion for sampling size.

To obtain information from the respondent, a collection of questionnaires is used as the study instrument. The argument in the questionnaire is given positively, and the Likert scale from 1 to 7 is used to express approval from very disagree to very agree for the argument. The questionnaire is divided into two parts, known as the demographic information (section A) and the Pasir Gudang bridging relationship information which contains the dimension of trust, cohesive and reciprocity (section B). The profile of ethnicities, gender, age and religion is being asked to the respondent in demographic information section. Section B contain three component with two item for each component.

The Likert Scale is divided into three stages which are low, moderate, and high to get the relationship ranking. The highest score (7 score) minus the lowest score (1 score) is the basic measurement for the bridging social capital relation score, then divide by three (three level). From the calculation the relationship level score interval class is:

1 – 3 = Low

4 – 5 = Moderate

6 – 7 = High

Reliability refers to the accuracy of the object in measuring build definition (Gunday et al., 2011). The Alpha Cronbach accuracy value is used to assess the questionnaire's reliability. Alpha Cronbach's value between 0.70 and 0.60 ranges is acknowledged as a strong reliability element (Hair, 2010). 100 respondents involved in a test program to assess the reliability of the questionnaire. The result Alpha Cronbach value for each item in the pilot study is 0.823 to 0.942 indicates that each item in the questionnaire is understandable by the 100 respondents. Using the Statistical Program for Social Science (SPSS) version 23, the data collected from 362 respondents were analyzed to obtain their mean and standard deviation. The descriptive analysis such as frequency, mean, cross-tabulation and Chi-Square Test was used in the demographic profile of the respondent and study of the bridging social capital in cross-ethnic relations between youth in Pasir Gudang, Johor.

#### 4.0 Result and discussion

Survey profiles of the participants in the study such as sex, ethnic group, age, and religious faith were represented using descriptive statistics. The statistical descriptive results are presented in frequency and percentage terms.

Table 1: Respondent demographic profile

Demographic Profile	Categori	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Sex</b>	Male	178	49.2
	Female	184	50.8
<b>Ethnic Group</b>	Malay	215	59.4
	Chinese	89	24.6
	Indian	58	16.0
<b>Age</b>	15 to 18	306	84.5
	19 to 24	13	3.6
	25 to 30	43	11.9
<b>Religious Faith</b>	Islam	214	59.1
	Hindu	53	14.6
	Buddha	75	20.7
	Cristian	18	5.0
	Others	2	0.6

Based on the outcome, in the actual study 49.2 percent of respondents were male while the remaining 50.8 percent were female. As regards ethnic group, 59.4% of respondents are Malays, 24.6% are Chinese and 16% are Indians. Age figures indicate that 84.5 percent of the youth in this sample were ages 15 to 18, 3.6 percent were ages 25 to 30 and the remaining 11.9 percent were ages 19 to 24. According to the respondents' religious groups, 59.1 percent of respondents were Muslim, 20.7 percent were Buddhist, 14.6 percent were Hindu and 5 percent were Christian.

##### 4.1 Bridging social capital among youth in Pasir Gudang

According to the operational definition of this study, bridging social capital is an individual relationship with a multi-ethnic community outside of Pasir Gudang. The constructs used to measure bridging social capital are the components of trust, cohesive and reciprocity. This means that the findings of the study will show the trust, cohesive and reciprocity of individuals with diverse ethnic communities outside Pasir Gudang.

Table 2: Bridging social capital among youth in Pasir Gudang

Component	Mean Value
Bridging Social Capital	4.55
- Trust	4.59
- Cohesive	5.02
- Reciprocity	4.62

Note: Score interpretation on scale:

1 – 3 : low

4 – 5 : moderate

6 – 7 : high

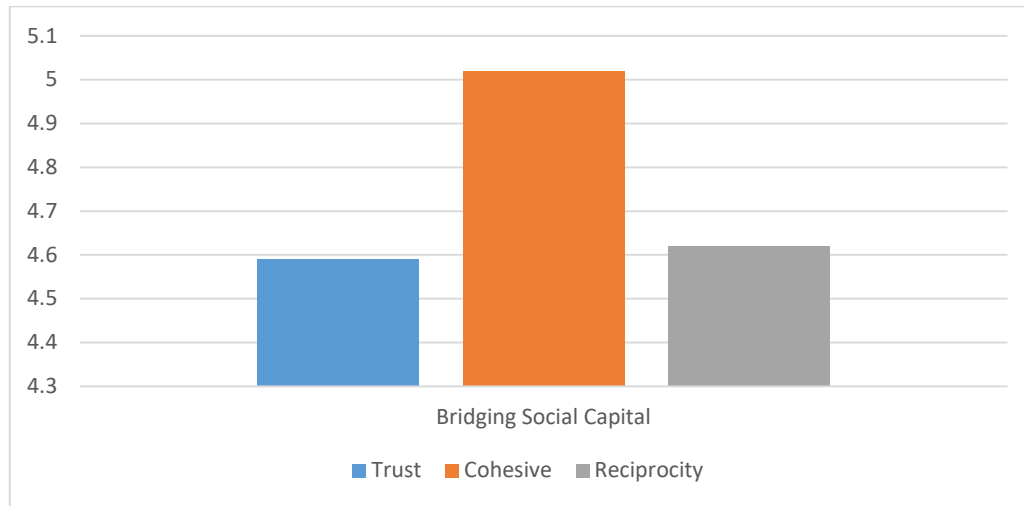


Figure 1: Bridging social capital among youth in Pasir Gudang

Note: Score interpretation on scale:

1 – 3 : low

4 – 5 : moderate

6 – 7 : high

The total findings in Pasir gudang that found bridging social capital among youth are moderate. All three elements of bridging social capital that are elements of trust, cohesiveness and reciprocity are of a moderate degree. The result is consistent with Halipah (2016). Rizal & Cheow (2012), Hamidah et al., (2011), Badariah (2011), Ibrahim, Hayati, Syahrin (2006), and Rusimah, Ainuddin & Salma (2004) but this result stands in contrast with the Nazri & Mansor (2014) and Suzana (2013) studies that found the intensity of youth cross ethnic ties in Malaysia to be high. This study shows that youth in Pasir Gudang build cross-ethnic social relationships with different ethnic communities outside of Pasir Gudang or in the context of studies called bridging social capital. These findings are in line with Monoimolki et al (2019), Pearrow (2017), Abbas et al (2016) and Tamam & Hashmi (2014). Cross-ethnic social relations based on bridging social capital are more structured because they increase the ability to obtain information and access to place themselves in the job network or to identify better job opportunities (Adler, Paul & Kwon, 2002). Cross-ethnic social relations based on bridging social capital are beyond social boundaries, thus enhancing tolerance and acceptance of differences through relationships with diverse communities (Paxton & Pamela, 2002).

#### 4.2 Differences of bridging social capital among youth in Pasir Gudang by ethnicities.

Bridging social capital is an individual relationship with a multiethnic society outside of Pasir Gudang, according to the operational concept of this analysis. The components of trust, cohesiveness, and reciprocity are the constructions used to calculate bridging social capital. This means that the findings of the study will show youth’s trust, cohesiveness and reciprocity among ethnicities with

diverse ethnic communities outside Pasir Gudang. The result of the density of the whole bridging social capital among Indian youth (5.34) is higher than Chinese youth (4.92) and Malay youth (3.89).

Table 3: The overall mean value of bridging social capital among youth in Pasir Gudang

Component	Malay	Chinese	Indian
Bridging Social Capital	3.89	4.92	5.34
- Trust	2.95	5.47	5.10
- Cohesive	4.47	4.97	5.63
- Reciprocity	4.25	4.32	5.29

Note: Score interpretation on scale:

- 1 – 3 : low
- 4 – 5 : moderate
- 6 – 7 : high

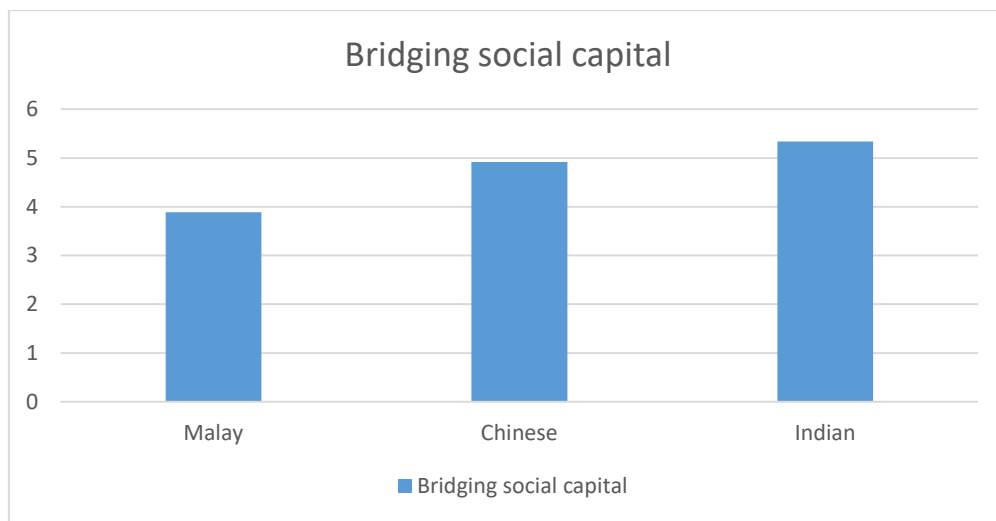


Figure 2: The mean value of bridging social capital among youth in Pasir Gudang

Note: Score interpretation on scale:

- 1 – 3 : low
- 4 – 5 : moderate
- 6 – 7 : high

Chi-Square Test results for bridging social capital differences among ethnicities are shown in Table 4. The findings indicate that there are substantial variations between ethnicities for bridging social capital ( $\chi^2 = 142.974$ ,  $df=68$ ,  $p<.05$ ).

Table 4: Chi-Square Test for bridging social capital differences among ethnicities

	Chi-Square Tests		
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	142.974 <sup>a</sup>	68	.000

Likelihood Ratio	164.879	68	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	80.169	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	362		

a. 82 cells (78.1%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .16.

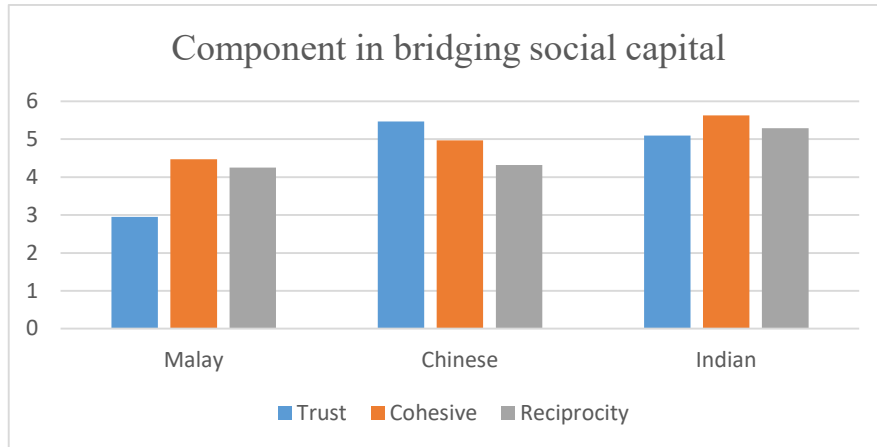


Figure 3: The mean value of trust, cohesive and reciprocity component among youth in Pasir Gudang

Note: Score interpretation on scale:

- 1 – 3 : low
- 4 – 5 : moderate
- 6 – 7 : high

Cross-ethnic social relations based on bridging social capital are developed among Malays, Chinese, and Indians youth. However looking specifically at the items, there are ethnicities built up and there are ethnicities that are not built. Overall, the study found that the bridging relations among the Indian youth are relatively more developed from the Malay and Chinese youth. This means that Indian youths have social relationships across ethnic groups with different ethnic people who are outside Pasir Gudang higher than the Malay and Chinese youth. This finding is consistent with the findings by Tamam & Hashmi (2014) also found that young Indians have high bridging social capital than the Malay and Chinese youth.

#### 4.2.1 Trust

The findings show that the value of trust between individuals and individuals of various ethnicities outside the Pasir Gudang area as a whole is built on Chinese and Indian youth. Relatively, the trust among Chinese respondents (5.47) is built higher than Indian respondents (5.10) and Malay (2.95).

Table 5: Mean comparison of trust among youth in Pasir Gudang, Johor

Item	Malay	Chinese	Indian
Trust to eat food prepared by other ethnic in outside Pasir Gudang community (c4)	2.90	5.40	5.07

Trust to eat in stall/ restaurant own by other ethnic in outside Pasir Gudang community (c5)	3.00	5.54	5.12
Total	2.95	5.47	5.10

However, looking specifically at the items shows that some are built and some are not built. Item c4 (trust to eat food prepared by other ethnic in outside Pasir Gudang community) shows the Chinese and Indian youth moderately built the trust to eat food prepared by other ethnic who are not Pasir Gudang community rather than Malay youths. Relatively, Chinese youths (5.40) have a higher element of trust followed by Indians (5.07). Malays youth (2.90) have low trust to eat foods prepared by other ethnic groups.

Item C5 (trust to eat in stall/ restaurant own by other ethnic in outside Pasir Gudang community) shows the Chinese is highly built the trust and Indian youth have moderately built their trust to eat in restaurants owned by other ethnic who are not Pasir Gudang community better compared to Malays youth. On average, Chinese youth (5.54) are more have trust elements than Indian youth (5.12). Malays youth (3.00) have low trust to eat in restaurants owned by other ethnic groups. These findings show the Chinese and Indian youth already develop high and moderate trust to eat food prepared by outside Pasir Gudang other ethnic but not among Malay youths. This shows that Malay youth are more sensitive to issues involving halal and haram in Islam.

The trust component in bridging social capital of the study found that the Indian and Chinese youth have more trust than Malay youths with different ethnic people outside the community Pasir Gudang. The high value of trust means they have no problem eating at a stall or a restaurant owned by other ethnic groups outside their community. Indian and Chinese youth also have trust that they can eat food prepared by other ethnic groups outside of Pasir Gudang. In contrast to the Malay youth, their trust is not built when it comes to the matter of food. Malay youths are more sensitive about food because it involves the question of halal and haram. Based on the theory of structuration Gidden (1984), this suggests that the Malay youths have moved the structure and regulation of Islam to the outside Pasir Gudang community. This process is in line with McGarry's (2016) finding that Muslim migrants in Ireland have tried to shift the structure and regulation of Islam outside their community systems. Nevertheless, the transfer of Islamic religious structures and rules into non-Muslim communities in Ireland led to the exercise of religious freedom in line with the individualistic norms of the non-Muslim community in Ireland. Just as the Malay youth who still emphasize the importance of following the rules of the religion outside Pasir Gudang is because it is consistent with the structure of Islam as the official religion in Malaysia. Thus, by behaving accordingly with Islamic religious structures either within the inside or outside the Pasir Gudang community, Malay youths will get an authoritative source such as the belief of the Muslim community which is the major population in Malaysia.

#### 4.2.2 Cohesive

The findings of the study show that the cohesive values of youth with various ethnicities outside the Pasir Gudang area as a whole are developed. Relatively, the cohesive values among the Indian youth (5.63) is higher than Chinese youth (4.97) and Malays youth (4.47).

Table 6: Mean comparison of cohesive among youth in Pasir Gudang, Johor

Item	Malay	Chinese	Indian
Have a cohesive relation to other ethnic outside my community through eating together activities (c13)	4.33	4.94	5.66



Have a cohesive relation to other ethnic outside my community through festival celebration (c14)	4.61	4.99	5.60
Total	4.47	4.97	5.63

The findings show that item c13 (Have a cohesive relation to other ethnicities outside my community through eating together activities), Malays and Chinese show a moderate cohesive relation while the Indians youth have highly built their cohesion with the activities of eating together with outside Pasir Gudang community. Relatively, Indians youth built their cohesive higher (5.66), followed by Chinese youths (4.94) and Malays youth (4.33).

As for item C14, (familiar with other ethnic groups through activities other ethnic celebrations outside my community) indicate Malays and Chinese show moderate cohesive relation while the Indians youth have highly built their cohesion with other ethnic groups through activities other ethnic celebrations. Relatively, Indians youth built their cohesion higher (5.60), followed by Chinese youths (4.97) and Malays youth (4.47). These findings demonstrate Malays, Chinese, and Indians youth could have built bridging social capital through social activities of eating together and celebrate the various festivals with other ethnic groups outside Pasir Gudang.

Overall, the cohesive components of bridging social capital are developed positively moderate among Malay, Chinese and Indian youth. Specifically, Indian youth have shown that they are more acquainted with different ethnic outside Pasir Gudang through dining activities with other ethnic and other ethnic festivals with other ethnic individuals outside Pasir Gudang. This finding shows that Indian youth are more familiar with different ethnicities outside Pasir Gudang. This finding is in line with Nazri & Muslim (2014) and Tamam & Hashmi (2014) who also find that Indian youth are more open than other ethnic groups in building relationships with people of different ethnicities outside their communities. Chinese and Malay youth also built their closeness in bridging social capital through dining activities with other ethnicities outside their communities and celebrations other ethnic festivals with another ethnic outside of their communities. For the Malay youth, this finding a little different because even though they do not build trust elements as they were sensitive to the food issues, they are open for dining together with other ethnic groups.

#### 4.2.3 Reciprocity

The findings show that reciprocal values between individuals and other ethnic groups outside the Pasir Gudang area as a whole are built. Relatively, the interrelationship among respondents in India (5.34) is built high rather than Chinese respondents (4.32) and Malay (4.25).

Table 7: Mean comparison of reciprocity among youth in Pasir Gudang, Johor

Item	Malay	Chinese	Indian
Visiting each other to other ethnic outside my community (c23)	4.16	4.33	5.38
Have economy activities together with other ethnic outside my community (c27)	4.33	4.30	5.19
Total	4.25	4.32	5.34

Item c23 (visiting each other to other ethnic outside my community) shows the Malays, Chinese and Indians youth moderately built their norm of reciprocity with other ethnic groups through mutual

activities of visiting with other ethnic groups. Relatively, Indians youth built their reciprocal norm higher (5.38), followed by Chinese youths (4.33) and Malays youth (4.16). Item c27 (have economy activities together with other ethnic outside my community) shows the Malays, Chinese and Indians youth have moderately built their reciprocity norm with other ethnic groups through economic activities. Relatively, Indians youth built their reciprocal norm higher (5.19), followed by Malays youth (4.33) and Chinese youths (4.30). These findings demonstrate Malays, Chinese, and Indians youth have built bridging social capital through the reciprocity norms in visiting each other activities and mutual economic activities with different ethnic people outside Pasir Gudang.

Furthermore, for the reciprocity norm in bridging social capital, overall is built positively among Malay, Chinese and Indian youth. In the specifications, the Indian youth have built reciprocity norms higher followed by the Chinese youth and the Malay youth. Indian youth find that the reciprocity norm between them and other ethnicities outside Pasir Gudang includes a celebration of various ethnic festivals and mutual economic activities. Findings in Nazri Muslim & Mansor (2014) and Khairul (2014) also found that Chinese and Indian youth are more open to participation in activities involving festival celebrations. Youths in Malaysia as a whole agree that mutual economic activities across ethnic groups will enhance their cohesion (Nazri Muslim & Mansor, 2014). However, the findings from Azmir & Paimah (2011) contradict the fact that multi-ethnic youth are engaged in economic activities with only ethnic-owned premises. However, the findings from Nazri Muslim & Mansor (2014) and Khairul (2014) only look at the closeness of individuals with diverse ethnic communities within their community. Therefore, the findings of this study have been able to identify that cross-ethnic relations not only occurs within the community in the region itself but can extend beyond the community.

## 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, Indian youth are more likely to develop more in trust, cohesive and reciprocal reciprocity norms with the different ethnic outside of Pasir. However, Malay and Chinese youth also can build trust, cohesiveness and norms of reciprocity with different ethnic people who are outside Pasir Gudang through social activities such as eating activities, festivals celebration and mutual economic activity. This shows that the youth behave strategically with the community outside of Pasir Gudang. According to Giddens's (1984) structural theory, strategic action by the youth is that they do not want to face restrictions on access to the resources they need in every structure and system involved. This is because bridging social capital have their resources and benefits to the potential development and strengthening of youth identity in society.

## Acknowledgement

The authors express their sincere gratitude to the Centre for General Studies and Co-curricular, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) for its support.

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