Parenting Role Model: The Professional Virtues of Malaysian Exemplary Mother (*Ibu Mithālī*)

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**ABSTRACT**

*Ibu Mithālī* is a national award bestowed to the best mothers in Malaysia. Research is conducted using Grounded Theory in qualitative research paradigm to explore their professional virtues as the role model to their children. Rich data are collected using semi-structured interviews, document analysis and observations. The research has discovered six main professional virtues of *Ibu Mithālī*: hardworking; bravery; patience; healthy lifestyle; cleanliness and punctuality. The virtues are pertinent to efficient family management, individual success, career development and community well-being. Thus, more researches should be conducted on successful people in the community as the positive role model and clear guidance of successful and meaningful life.

**Keywords:** Professional virtues, positive parenting, parenting role model, motherhood, educational psychology

**INTRODUCTION**

Parenting is the most challenging role for any parent. Good parenting refers to the parents’ achievement in developing the potential of their children until they become individuals with strong faith, good conduct of ethics and beneficial qualities to others (Nik Pa, 2002). In addition, parenting socialization is the major agent of socialization which shapes the child’s image on his or her future. Besides, parenting attitudes have a significant relationship with child’s future orientation (Mester, 2012). Therefore, parenting role model sets off parents to be the main source of example for the children (Baba, 2010) in developing their personality.
Despite numerous problems occur in any typical family settings, there are still hope and success stories which highlight the achievement of these unsung heroes. These mothers have gone through the hardship and overcome the odds; their maternal instincts enable them to be outstanding in nurturing and educating their children. They are coined as *Ibu Mithālī*, the nation’s exemplary mothers. In Malaysia, *Ibu Mithālī* or exemplary mothers, demonstrate profound examples in providing the best care for the children and guiding them to be successful adult despite the adversity and sufferings in raising them. *Ibu Mithālī*, a combination of Malay and Arabic words, means exemplary mothers. In Malaysia, *Ibu Mithālī* Awards or Exemplary Mothers Awards are bestowed to ten successful mothers from year 1980 to year 2010 as recognition from the government for their role in the family; their maternal skills assist greatly in shaping the society. The recipients must fulfil all the criteria of having, at least, five successful children; good personality; positive relationship with others; participative attitude with community and practicing religious way of life. A research should be conducted to reveal the professional virtues among *Ibu Mithālī* as a benchmark of parenting role model.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**Role Model**

Public figure should demonstrate positive role model and behaviour. However, many public figure such as Tiger Woods, Lindsay Lohan and Bill Clinton are labelled as failure role models (Spurgin, 2013). There are two concepts of role model: ‘particularism’ and ‘generalism’. Particularism role model is a voluntarily role model and specific to one’s particular field. Thus, the role model obligations are only to the virtues associated with one’s success in the field. For example, a professor’s role model obligation extends only to specific virtues such as academic integrity and dedication to academic work (Spurgin, 2012). Generalism role model is not a voluntarily role model. In this case, the role model obligations encompass one’s lives. The behaviour of this type of role model greatly influences others especially young people (Spurgin, 2012).

Young children construct internal working model based on attachment relationship starting from infancy stage onwards. Thus, childhood experiences may later affect one’s psychosocial functioning during adulthood (McCarthy & Maughan, 2010). For example, higher level of maternal loving behaviour during childhood is significant for satisfaction of love relationship later in adulthood (McCarthy & Maughan, 2010). The Importance of Role Model

Role model and mentoring is a crucial need for child’s development. Jamieson (2012) interviews college students to understand their perception towards positive role model in their lives. In general, positive role model makes an impression to teenagers and inspires them to follow the model. For example, Shaun’s, a college principal, dedication to work and commitment in

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*Note: The text above is a natural representation of the document content.*
building the relationship greatly influences her students’ growth development in life and career. People usually have more than one role model in life. The role models encompass family members to professionals. Each role model educates, indirectly, on specific roles in life. For examples; a school counsellor shows consistent and healthy relationship with others; and a businessman shows the importance of success and hard work. A positive role model is also important in handling trauma and psychological disorders. For example, a supportive and helpful father and a sister enable a little girl from a broken family to adapt to the life’s challenge when her mother left her (Jamieson, 2012).

A growing body of research indicates that adverse childhood experiences are associated with increased risks of a range of poor psychosocial outcomes in adult life. For example, negative parent–child relationships have been linked to difficulties in adult love relationships (McCarthy & Maughan, 2010).

**Parenting Role Model**

Parents are the most general and extensive set of role model obligations. The obligations require them to show positive role model with high moral virtues to their children. Some of the virtues are respect for others, honesty, integrity, reasonable work ethic and productive. Parents choose to raise their children; thus, the former are responsible to demonstrate the latter how to live well (Spurgin, 2012).

Personality is defined as a set of psychological characteristics that lead one to behave in a consistent way. Indeed, parent’s personality and observed behaviour affect their children’s personality over time. They play a significant role in the development of children personality trait that promotes competence and personal well-being (Schofield et. al., 2012). Considering that children imitate parents’ behaviour through socialization process, positive role model from parents is pertinent in moulding the positive attitude and behaviour of their children.

Financial literacy and financial education affect one’s financial skills and social well-being. Financial skills begin with parental teaching and role modelling. Children learn the concepts of saving and money management from parents. Children whose parents are lack of financial literacy might not be able to manage their financial very well. A research on low- and moderate-income homeowners shows positive relationship between parental money management and children’s asset-building outcomes in adulthood. Greater parental teaching or guidance during childhood is associated with reduced loan delinquency and foreclosure among low-middle income homeowners in the later years (Grinstein-Weiss et al., 2012). Research should be conducted to reveal the professional virtues among Ibu Mithālī as a benchmark of parenting role model.

Mothers are the best role model to their children. Mothers provide mutual love and support for their children (Ellingsen et. al., 2012).
Thus, their values, attitudes and behaviours have huge influence to their children in the early and later years. Mother is a central figure and bestowed in a high position with significant role in nurturing educational process through parenting in family. In Malay society, the role of mother is reflected in the proverb: “the hand that shakes the cradle will shake the world”. Flouri (2008) states that children’s attitude, behaviour motivation, and educational attainment are tied very closely to mother’s influence. It has given significant revelation that further insight and research on how these exemplary mothers raise and nurture their children. The close bond between these two facts further validate that mother’s attitude, expectation and motivation affect their children’s academic achievement and behaviour in later years (Flouri & Hawkes, 2008).

There are many ways to enhance the effectiveness of parenting role model. One of them is through a program which focuses on protective family factors. It provides information and skills training activities to help parents to be good role models for their children (Griffin et. al., 2011). Griffin and friends (2011), develop Parental Role Modelling scale with eight items as part of the parenting measurement. The scale assesses the frequency of parental positive behaviour towards their children such as positive self-esteem and strong principle (Griffin et al., 2011).

Professional Virtues

Virtuous professionals are the successful professionals as virtuous life is the happy life for Aristotle (Stovall, 2011). In Aristotelian theory, humans’ virtues require to fulfil the definitive function of human being. Professional plays a social role of a profession. Thus, the virtues professionals must exhibit to fulfil that role. Professional virtues help to foster a sense of pride and responsibility among professionals (Stovall, 2011). There are two prominent ethical frameworks namely utilitarianism and deontic ethics. These two ethics are known as the virtue of ethics because they specify the nature of social goods and provide a relevant framework of thinking about good practice (Bessent, 2009).

A virtuous life is a part of professional identity. Each type of profession has its own ethics of conduct to boost their effectiveness and efficiency at work. For example, the virtue of selflessness or unselfishness is an important quality among professional practicing nurses (Cusveller, 2011). In engineering profession, the professional engineers have been taught about the engineering ethics that promote their awareness in protecting the public from professional misconducts and harmful effects of technology. On the other hand, there are certain characteristics about the engineering professionalism that are unable to be adequately accounted for in terms of rules, certainly not negative rules: (1) sensitivity to risk; (2) awareness of the social context of technology; (3) respect for nature; and (4) commitment to the
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METHOD

Participants

The participants of the research are Ibu Mithālī or exemplary mothers and their children. There were 10 mothers awarded as Ibu Mithālī since 1984. Regretfully, five of them have passed away and one is under medical treatment at the ICU. Thus, only four of the identified Ibu Mithālī are able to participate in the research. As mentioned earlier, another group of participants are the children of Ibu Mithālī. The age range of the participating children are between 6 to 17 years. These children come from various backgrounds of study and career and have been proven to be very successful.

Procedure

The research employs several methods in data collection to obtain sufficient information on Ibu Mithālī's moral virtues as a positive role model for their children. The methods used are series of interview with Ibu Mithālī and respective children, document analysis related to Ibu Mithālī and observation. The data analysis begins from the data collection and ends when it becomes saturated. According to Charmaz (2008), saturated signifies that there is no new relevant categories emerge from the data. Data analysis starts with initial coding, axial coding and coding. The initial coding marks the start of data analysis. At the initial coding, the data from the interviews is transcribed and the written documents are coded by categorising it according to incidents. Subsequently, the data is compared using constant comparative method. About 100 codes are generated during open coding. The codes are then merged into 11 categories. The codes are correlated with each other in axial coding. At this stage, the codes are merged into three major categories. In selective coding, the codes are intertwined with the previous literature reviews or theories to build a story plot and the virtues of Ibu Mithālī’s model.

RESULT

Good character is a symbol of the perfection of faith (Al-Ghazali, 2005). Professional virtues is a part of good character. The virtue protects and enhances the standard quality of a profession at work. The research discovers that Ibu Mithālī or exemplary mothers demonstrate an important quality of professional virtues as a positive role model to their children. They are hard-working, brave, patient, punctual, practicing healthy...
life styles and good cleanliness. The virtues are pertinent for Ibu Mithālī to excellently nurture their children, maintain positive family climate, perform household chores, and complete their tasks at work or in the community.

**Hard-Working**

Ibu Mithālī or exemplary mothers are, undoubtedly, hard-working women. At early age, they have helped their parents: wake-up early in the morning, cook for the family and perform multiple jobs to support the family income.

Since the age of six years, Madam Zabedah has helped her family selling cakes. For about nine years she has voluntarily sold the cakes early in the morning to ease the burden of her family. As a matter of fact, her diligence and hard work since childhood is a good training ground for her being a savvy entrepreneur. It is proven that she has been the bread and butter to ease the family burden.

*At the age of six years, Hajjah Zabedah peddled cakes. At the age of nine years old, Hajjah Zabedah joined Kajang Malay School. She sold cakes as early as six o’clock in the morning. The remaining snacks would be sold at the schools.*

(Jawiah, 2011).

Madam Ayot has similar experience. She assisted her mother selling cakes, growing vegetables and fruits since her childhood. The labour, meant for adults, signifies that ever since childhood she works hard to support her family. She also learns to be a responsible person and a caring sister to her family.

*She helped her mother making cakes and peddling the goodies to cover school expenses. Their efforts in supporting family income continued by exploring the edge of unnamed land for farming, growing vegetables and fruits to improve the income of the family.*

(Siti Rogayah, 2011).

Ibu Mithālī is also a morning person as she wakes up early in the morning to manage the children and the family. This is important to ensure various activities for the day are taken care of. Ibu Mithālī wakes up before dawn to perform prayers and prepares breakfast. For example, Madam Maimon woke up at about 3.00 am to 4.00 am daily.

Mrs. Azizah, a former Headmistress, daughter of late Madam Maimon’s explains, “My mother woke up at three o’clock in the morning.”

*Hajjah Maimon woke up as early as four o’clock in the morning to start performing her daily tasks especially when her children were still school goers. While others were still dreaming, she would be in the kitchen preparing food for her husband and children.*

(Mastura, 2011).
Madam Esah, too, wakes up at 4.00 am to bake cakes for her family. She must provide enough cakes for her children early in the morning. Immediately after that, she has to continue to perform rubber tapping by dawn.

Madam Esah’s daughter, Mrs. Rosilah, a teacher reminisces, “My mother makes tepung talam, koci cakes, or other savoury cakes as early as 4.00 am. Each child gets three pieces.”

Ustaz Ashraf associates her mother’s wake-up time with a species of bird. His mother, Madam Kalsum, wakes up before dawn to manage her children and prepare them for school. During the 70’s, the electrical items such as electrical iron was limited. So, his mother resorts to using charcoal iron which is difficult to handle and a bit hazardous in case of mishandling.

Madam Kalsum’s son, Ustaz Ashraf, a lecturer evokes old memory, “The sound of a particular bird, perhaps woody woodpecker or somewhat similar, reminds me of my mother. She wakes up before the bird starts singing in the morning.”

Similarly, Madam Awiah, the 10th Ibu Mithālī, too, wakes up around 3.00 am to 4.30 am.

Usually she wakes up at 4.30 am. She wakes up as early as 3.00 am if she decides to cook nasi lemak.

Madam Enjah wakes up at 4 am.

Every day she gets up at four in the morning to manage the children’s’ needs for schools such as food and clothing. Then she bakes cakes to be delivered to few shops.

(Nik Safiah, 2011b).

Ibu Mithālī loves to cook for her children. For example, Madam Kalsum wakes up very early to cook rice and cakes for her children. Her effort is very important because good breakfast provides enough energy and nutrition for the children. It is also needed to develop their brain cells.

Madam Kalsum’s son, Ustaz Ashraf, a lecturer says, “My mother wakes up for Subuh prayer. Then she cooks rice and cookies for her children.”

Cooking was Madam Ayot’s passion. She was skilful in preparing various types of cakes and biscuits for Eid Celebration. It was a financial relief that helped the family during the festive celebrations. The allocated money for the cookies could be channelled for educational purposes. In addition, her children enjoyed the excitement of preparing their own festive cookies.

The late Madam Ayot’s son, Dr. Ahmad, a dentist explains, “We did not buy Raya cookies because my mother baked all of them for Hari Raya celebration. She baked various types of cakes and biscuits.”

Madam Esah shares the same passion for cooking. She provides food for her children, daily, except on Sundays. Cooking has proven to be a tool for prudent spending. It supports the family constraint budget. At the same time, it is a good and healthy practice. Every weekend, she trains her daughters how to prepare dishes. The training is
important to improve the cooking skills and at the same time develop responsible traits.

Madam Esah’s daughter, Mrs. Rosilah, a teacher explains, “My mother prepares breakfast early in the morning. She cooks all the dishes on her own. I only help during school holidays. All food is already cooked when the children reach home.”

Although the job to provide food on the table or improve family’s financial expenditure is not the responsibility of a wife, the sensitivity towards her husband’s limited income, eventually, leads the *Ibu Mithālī* to venture in various jobs to support their family.

For example, the late Madam Ayot, sewed scarves until late at night to sell them to the community in order to finance the children’s school expenses. She understood that her husband’s low salary was insufficient to support the immediate family and other relatives who relied on her husband. Therefore, she did the extra work at home. Sewing was one of the ways for her to secure income. That eased her husband’s financial burden, at the same time, enabled her to monitor the progress of their children.

The late Madam Ayot’s son, Dr. Ahmad, a dentist reiterates “My mother still worked on sewing and stitching till midnight.”

Madam Esah is a hard working woman; the attributes she developed since the early age. She loves to work and feels restless if there is nothing to do. At the age of 70, Madam Esah still involves in a small scale business and performs household work even though the family financial situation is stable and all of her 17 children are now working. Before the interview, she has just come back from rubber tapping. In addition, there are plenty of dried betel nut in her compound up for sale.

The children always request her to stop working as they can afford to care and provide her with allowance but she declines the offer. Instead, she continues with her business of making herbal medicine from the roots, selling cucumber oil, producing preserved fish, performing massages, and providing the needs of mothers during maternity confinement. Evidently, *Ibu Mithālī* chooses to be independent. She does not depend on her children’s financial income even though a lot of money and sacrifice have been made for her children’s education and development.

Madam Esah’s daughter, Mrs. Rosilah, a teacher further describes her mother, “She is hardworking, determined and never grumbles. She prepares breakfast for her children. She believes that it is all about responsibilities. She has never felt tired every day in her life.”

Madam Esah is also a very productive person. She produces traditional herbs and beauty products, do rubber tapping and gardening until today. She enjoys occupying her time with work and she views it as her hobby.

*She sells herbs, traditional cooling powder or bedak sejuk, cucumber oil, medicine and other traditional medicine. In fact, she still does all those activities and do rubber tapping. She spends most of her time devoting to the soil. At the*
compound of the house, there are varieties of flowers and fruits. 
(Noor Aziah, 2011)

Bravery

Ibu Mithālī is a brave person. Madam Kalsum has been left alone with her baby on the hill during the early days of her marriage. Her husband always leaves home for missionary programs. Her bravery makes it possible for her husband to serve the community in peace and also enables her to take care of her children by herself. It helps in nurturing the same attitude to her children.

Madam Kalsum’s son, Ustaz Ashraf, a lecturer explains, “My family lives on a hill. My father scatters sulphur surrounding the perimeter of the house for protection. My mother is left behind to take care of home and the children while he is away.”

Madam Maimon was a timid person, but able to deliver public speaking when required. Her children were impressed with this special quality. It also indicates that she could easily adapt to any situations. Her bravery enabled her to share knowledge and experiences in nurturing her children with the society.

The late Madam Maimon’s daughter, Dr. Aminah, a Medical Doctor says, “My mother was timid but she could perform public speaking upon invitation by the Religious Department or Educational Department. My siblings thought that she was not courageous enough. Well at least not until she had received the award.”

Ibu Mithālī is also known for her boldness in challenging the norm because she believes in doing the right thing. For example, Madam Wan Mas and her cousin are very brave in breaking the norm to be the first girls attending school in Kelantan. Their persistence highly stigmatizes the community. Despite the obstacles and ill treatment of others, they still pursue education. Their courage and perseverance have been a great example to the community. In the end, they manage to enlighten the public on the importance of education to female children.

Madam Wan Mas’s daughter, Mrs. Nik Mastura, a former Educational Officer says, “At that time there were only two girls and the rest were boys. Her father was one of the boys.”

Patience

Ibu Mithālī’s children perceive their mothers as persons with high tolerance and patience. The children opine that it is impossible to handle their behaviour smartly without patience. However, Ibu Mithālī, can easily practice patience. Their strong faith and consistencies in performing prayer develop the nature of patience. In addition, the caring nature of motherhood drives the trait of patience.

Madam Kalsum’s son, Ustaz Ashraf, a lecturer says, “She (Madam Kalsum) has patience...”

Late Madam Maimon’s daughter, Mrs. Azizah, a Former Headmistress describes her mother, “My mom was a patient person.”
Mrs. Rosilah, Madam Esah’s daughter expresses her amazement about her mother’s abundance of patience excellently bringing up 17 children.

Madam Esah’s daughter, Mrs. Rosilah, a teacher describes, “My mum was a person of patience…..”

Mrs. Mastura says that her mother is very patient even when other people criticize her severely. Her religious knowledge enables her to handle bad behaviour of others with patience. It is also part of wisdom.

Madam Wan Mas’s daughter, Mrs. Nik Mastura, a former Educational Officer says, “Some people comment on her attitude. Other people comments on her never affect us for all the comments are merely human talk. We just do not over-think them. Besides, we have learnt enough from religious teaching to handle the challenges wisely.”

Madam Kamariah is incredibly patient in nurturing her children, taking good care of her husband as well as her mother-in-law. Normally, living under the same roof with a mother-in-law triggers various difficulties to a wife. Moreover, not many people are able to live together and care for an ailing mother-in-law for many years unless he or she is exceptionally patient. Madam Kamariah did it without hesitation.

... Hajjah Kamariah was able to live together with the ailing mother-in-law under the same roof with peace and harmony for 25 years until she (the mother in law) passed away in 1975.

(Rahmah, 2011)

Madam Kalsum is also a very patient person. Her unwavering patience makes it possible for her to nurture her 15 children with full of love and care. In addition, she also took care of the welfare of her elderly mother-in-law. The mother-in-law lived with her until her death at the age of nearly 100 years old. According to her son, Ustaz Ashraf, it had not been an easy task for his mother because his grandmother was too old. Madam Kalsum’s patience has greatly influenced her children in carrying their responsibilities to their parents. Evidently, the children, immediately rush home to provide the first class medicine and treatment for their parents when either one of them falls ill.

A house located in front of the mosque in Kampung Jarak Atas, Seberang Perai, Penang, is the witness on how this hardworking mother, Madam Kalsum, the 8th Ibu Mithālī, brings up her 15 children with great patience and virtue of religious education and Malay customs.

(Noor Aziah, 2011a).
**Healthy Life Style**

Strong body enables *Ibu Mithālī* to perform various useful activities. Strong body is a result of a healthy lifestyle. For example, Madam Esah is extremely concerned about healthy lifestyles. She has started consuming herbs since early age. She also takes balanced diet and avoids food that may possibly be harmful to the body. As a matter of fact, she is extraordinarily concerned about her food intake especially after maternity. On top of consuming healthy food, Madam Esah is also active in agricultural activities. Such activities require active physical movement resulting healthy body. For example, a research shows that exercise or physical activities of 15 to 20 minutes, performed at least three times per week may reduce stress (Jamsiah et al., 2010). Consuming nutritious food coupled with maintaining active lifestyles had enabled her to be physically healthy at the age of 70’s. In comparison, most of her friends are either sick or weak.

Madam Esah’s husband, Mr. Sulaiman proudly says, “Madam Esah loves to take herbs. Thus, she is strong. Unfortunately, her friends are sick.”

Madam Esah, the 9th Ibu Mithālī confesses, “I only ate rice, boiled vegetables and grilled fish during maternity confinement. Nowadays, I eat bitter beans and avoid cucumber because it is believed to be ‘cold’ bringing negative effects to our body.”

Likewise, Madam Wan Mas, has been practicing healthy lifestyles. She loves salads in each meal.

Madam Wan Mas’s daughter, Mrs. Nik Mastura, a former Educational Officer admits, “I did not eat salad since I was a child but my mother did.”

In addition, Madam Esah possesses the skills in concocting traditional herbs and producing food supplements for the entire family. One of her children, Madam Rosilah has inherited the skill. The skill helps Madam Esah to practice healthy lifestyle as well as promote it to others. In addition, her caring towards the societies is pivotal when she illustrates concern on women’s health and beauty through the manufacturing of cooling powder or *bedak sejuk* using natural fragrance. Furthermore, her products are proven safe from hazardous chemical substances which may possibly cause negative long-term effect to women’s health and beauty.

During the visit, the researcher finds Madam Esah looking stunning, healthy and fit despite the fact that she has been performing multiple tasks since her young age and given birth to 17 babies. Her husband also looks strong and healthy as he also eats herbs that she supplies with honey on a daily basis. On this note, our new generation should learn from her ability to maintain health and beauty despite the challenges and difficulties in life. Special documentation should be considered to document her secrets to healthy lifestyles.

_She cleanses and dries spices. Subsequently, she blends the spices and encases them into capsules. Hajjah Esah herbal spices are very_
popular among people, especially women after childbirth.

(Noor Aziah, 2011c)

All Ibu Mithālī have many children. The minimum number of children that they have is six. It indicates that they are strong and healthy prior to entering menopause stage. According to Abdullah (2010), health is an important criteria of choosing a wife considering only healthy women are able to fulfil her responsibilities towards the family. The responsibilities includes managing child education, household chores and family welfare.

Cleanliness

Madam Awiah is extremely particular about cleanliness. She ensures that her house is clean and tidy before leaving home. She also makes certain that her children’s bedrooms are also neat, clean and tidy. Her late husband, a former soldier, may possibly have influenced her cleanliness attitude in view of his job requiring strict self-discipline.

Madam Awiah, the 10th Ibu Mithālī proudly says, “The bedding must be clean. If the children are able to iron, then iron it. That is the soldier’s trait and discipline of their late father.“

Madam Enjah is also utterly concerned about cleanliness. Her house is clean and tidy despite its small capacity crammed with high occupancy of residents. It shows that both husband and wife constantly train their children to pay attention to personal hygiene, clothing and cleanliness of home during their childhood.

Both husband and wife, Madam Enjah and Mr. Ismail, are exceptionally concerned about cleanliness. Although their house is small crammed with many children, their home is clean and tidy. Their clothing are also clean.

(Nik Safiah, 2011a)

During the visit to Madam Wan Mas and Madam Awiah’s house, the researcher observes that both houses are clean and tidy, despite the fact that the visit is a day earlier than schedule. The house is maintained clean and tidy. Madam Esah’s house compound, living room, kitchen, toilet and bathroom are all in good condition.

Punctuality

Ibu Mithālī is also entirely concerned about time management. For example, Madam Maimon had ensured that they would depart early in the morning for long journeys. She would also ensure that they arrive before the evening prayer. Evidently, she was a very punctual person. She was always on time for any appointment. Her exceptional time management habit has immensely influenced her family. Punctuality and effective time management have been inculcated as her family culture, too.

The late Madam Maimon’s daughter, Mrs. Azizah, a former Headmistress says, “If the travelling distance was far, we would leave early in the morning. We must be ready
right after dawn and arrive home before dusk. My mother would always be punctual when it comes to time. If she had promised 6 o’clock, we would be ready by then. She was very stringent on time management. Thus, effective time management has been the culture of our family.”

Evidently, Ibu Mithālī’s punctuality can also be seen from their wake-up time. Their wake up time is always early in the morning. They start with performing obligatory prayer at the beginning of the day as previously discussed at subtopics under hard-working.

**DISCUSSION**

Parenting, especially being a mother is a choice. Mother is a voluntarily role model. She is obligated to demonstrate the best virtues to her children for their entire life. Thus, mother’s role model are the combination of both concept of role model by Spurgin (2012): particularism and generalism. Mother-child high attachment increases the influence of mother’s attitude and behaviour, through early experience of motherhood, in shaping their children’s personality and behaviour throughout adulthood.

Mother’s parenting role model begins since pregnancy until demise. However, the effect of parenting role model of mothers towards one’s behaviour and personality can be seen and observed since infancy until late-stage of human life. It is due to the attachment relationship between mothers and children which later affect the psychosocial functioning at later age (2010).

Mother is a multi-tasking profession. They play their role as a care giver, chef, manager, dietician, financial administrator, health co-ordinator, social worker, counsellor, therapist, psychologist, consultant and teacher for their children. Thus, being a successful mother needs a range of professional virtues.

Ibu Mithālī possesses high professional virtues in everyday life. She is hardworking, brave, patient, punctual, committed to healthy life style and cleanliness. Those virtues drive all Ibu Mithālī to be competent, effective and efficient. It is proven through the life achievement and good ethics of conduct among their children as documented by Nik Safiah and friends (2004).

A normal and healthy person usually has more than one role model in their whole life. However, parenting role model affects most. Thus, a mother must possess good characters and positive quality of life as a role model and a mentor to her children. Mothers are responsible to positive experience of their children in order to enhance their positive psychosocial outcomes during adulthood.

Special parenting role model inventory should be developed based on special context to measure the practice of good parenting role model among mothers. The measurement may also be the preventive measure of negative parenting role model especially to young people and future mothers. Based on the measurement, a special module for parenting group counselling and training program can be developed to mould positive parenting role model especially to mothers.
CONCLUSION

In summary, the professional virtues enable the exemplary mothers in managing their family, career and community work efficiently despite their life hardship. In other words, they possess balanced personalities which promote human equilibrium and well-being. At the same time, they become positive role model to their children through socialization process in the family. These virtues are then internalized by Their children, internalize these virtues that inspire them to be excellent in academic institutions, community, and career.

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