

Readiness of Implementation of School-Based Assessment among the Malay Language Teachers in National Schools

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This study aimed to identify the skills readiness of Malay language teachers in National Schools in implementation of School Based Assessment (SBA) and identify whether there was any relationship between experiences of teaching among the Malay language teachers in National Schools with their skills in implementation of SBA. A questionnaire was used as an instrument in the study. The respondents consisted of 110 Malay language teachers in 35 National Schools located in the Klang Valley, Kuala Lumpur. Data analysis was carried out with the aid of the SPSS program. The results showed that the readiness of teachers in terms of skills affect the implementation of the SBA, while Pearson's correlation analysis showed that there was significant correlation between the teaching experiences of the Malay language teachers in National Schools with their skills in the implementation of SBA. The researchers also proposed some recommendations to make the SBA a success.

Keywords: Malay language, National Schools, School-based assessment, skills.

is called Standard Curriculum of Primary Schools (KSSR)

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1. INTRODUCTION

Several countries, such as Australia, Finland, Greece, Portuguese, United Kingdom, Hong Kong, Israel, New Zealand, Korea and Ireland, have implemented SBA for many years^{1,2,3,4,5}. Study in Hong Kong⁴ suggest that the benefits of SBA of fieldwork to create a positive backwash effect on teaching, as well as to enhance the validity and reliability of fieldwork assessment. Generally, the researches in these countries signify the need for an on-going evaluation of the SBA. The effectiveness of the SBA depend on a variety of variables, such as those concerning the teachers and learners.

Malaysia is actively moving towards Vision 2020 to becoming modern country; various efforts have been made especially in the education system. In accordance with the Master Development Plan of Education⁶, the Ministry of Education has implemented a transformation of the education system from 2010 to enhance academic quality, curriculum and personality development of pupils. With the implementation of school-based assessment (SBA) which is an alternative and authentic assessment of coursework, projects, performances, physical activities, and curriculum, the personality, character and personality development of pupils can be achieved⁷.

SBA was carried out through a new curriculum that

Budget 2011 has seen the creation of a new curriculum to produce first class mind's pupils who are able to compete and face the challenges in the 21st century. The old curriculum called Integrated Curriculum of Primary Schools (KBSR) was reviewed and amended with emphasis on "mindset, personality, and creativity, innovation and competitiveness"⁸.

KSSR is a curriculum developed to strengthen the language subjects such as Malay language and English language. Hence forth, these languages can be taught in creative and interesting method such as singing, drama, music and games⁹. New and more interesting teaching methods are certainly draw more attention and interest of pupils to learn in a more concise and efficient circumstances.

2. STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS

On December 17, 2010, the Cabinet had agreed that improvements of National Education System Assessment for the Primary School Achievement Test (UPSR) and Lower Secondary School Assessment (PMR) was performed with an emphasis on assessment for learning and assessment of learning.

School Based Assessment (SBA) is a holistic assessment of the rating of cognitive, affective and psychomotor in line with the National Education Philosophy and the national educational curriculum. These assessments need to be designed, built, managed, checked, recorded and reported by the respective school teachers. SBA should be implemented by teachers based on the School Based Assessment Guide, Document of Standards Performance and Assessment (DSKP) and Manual SPSBA provided by the Examination Board (LP).

Under this assessment, standards performance used to evaluate the progress and growth of learning and achievement of primary school pupils. Assessment serves as the process to obtain information about the extent to which pupils know, understand and can do or have mastered what is learned based on the standards performance. This standards performance statement was set by the levels of authority as envisaged in the curriculum document. Pupils are assessed fairly and equitably as individuals based on their ability, talent, skills and potential without comparison with other pupils.

Teachers are the most important agents in realizing SBA a success in school^{10,11,12}. Teachers are given the assignment to carry out assessments for each pupil according to their ability. Ratings are to be fair and do not apply the bias. According to the *School Based Management Handbook*¹³, stage of development set by the band (band 1 to 6) for phase one and of the proficiency levels (mastery level of 1 to 6) for phase two.

To ensure that justice is maintained for each pupil, the teachers are responsible for recording every evident which was mastered by pupils for online reporting schedule prepared by Examination Board at any time appropriately. Teachers also need to provide reporting process that determines the level of pupils' mastery of the subjects taught by descriptors and evident contained in the Document of Standards Performance. Reporting can be done in the formative and cumulative form. Evident Formative Reporting of pupils is used as evidence of interpretation materials for pupils' mastery, whereas Reporting Cumulative Descriptors Statement are used as report of pupils' performance.

However, problems arise in the implementation of the SBA such as usage of Document of Standards Performance (DSP) that caused teachers tied to the number of descriptors and statements evident, extensive file management include pupils' files (FPM) and Record of Transit, recording of pupils' performance through on-line SBA Management System that are difficult to access and time-consuming. Among these problems, the congestion online problem at website of the Ministry of Education is the most serious problem because it involves all subjects from Standard 1 to 6 in National Schools and Form 1 to 5 in the National Secondary School. SBA also carry out formative testing involving the assessment of all time. This hot issue was discussed in the media, and finally caught the attention of the Ministry of Education.

After further investigation, the MOE decided that filing marks SBA online abolished and replaced with a filling mark offline effective from April, 1 2014¹⁴.

Constraints and complaints from various quarters about the weakness of the SBA carry on until now, is something that needs to be curbed. Our second Education Minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh has acknowledged that "there is a weakness in the implementation of the SBA, which was introduced in schools since 2011 and SBA has charged the teachers other than teaching duties in the classroom¹⁵.

According Rosni and Siti Fatimah⁷, teachers should be given early to ensure availability of the effectiveness of SBA for pupils' performance that the approaches implemented meet the objectives of the Ministry of Education. In this context, the skill level of teachers is an important element. Teacher skills are equally important factors for achieving the objectives of teaching and learning. Professional skills available to teachers involving pedagogy, epistemology, evaluation and reflection skills is something that is needed in curriculum teaching. Teachers who have certain skills will give them the expertise to handle an instruction^{5,7,10}. If the teachers do not mastered the implementation of the SBA, the pupils will drop out of the studies.

In implementing basic education, teachers' skills is not something to be taken lightly as it can affect the effectiveness of teaching and learning. In carrying out this SBA, particularly the subject of Malay language, teachers need to be open to accept the change. Malay language teachers became the focus of study because Malay language as the national language in Malaysia, always be the pioneer to implement all the government policies and they become the role model for other teachers.

However this is not something easy to be implemented. With this new system, the reforms raised a number of concerns in the wider school community, including sociocultural, technical, and practical concerns⁴. With the skills mastery, teachers will easily understand the content of the curriculum and convey knowledge to students more effectively. Readiness here refer to the related knowledge that teachers acquired from various channels: training/courses, mentoring system, ICT facilities besides their skills to prepare the assessment. Therefore, the research questions in the study were:

1. How was the skill readiness of National School teachers in the implementation of SBA?
2. Was there any relationship between the teaching experiences of the Malay language teachers at National Schools with their skills in implementing the SBA?

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study applied the Theory of Curriculum Development by Hilda Taba¹⁶ (1966) who argued that a teacher usually has existing knowledge and experience related to the job. In this context, he/she will associate the

knowledge he/she receives (received knowledge) with his/her knowledge through experience (experiential knowledge) which are two important sources of knowledge in professional training. Both sources of such knowledge are interdependent with each other to allow teachers more willing to carry out his professional duties. Based on Hilda Taba's (1966) study, a conceptual framework was drawn up in connection with the willingness of Malay language teachers from National schools to master the skills in e implementation of SBA.

Quantitative methods through the survey was used in collecting data in this study. The questionnaire consisted of two parts, A and B. Part A is the profile of respondents, meanwhile part B was related to Malay language teachers' skills in implementing the SBA (10 items).

To obtain the reliability of the instrument, a survey was conducted on 30 Malay language teachers in National School by using questionnaires. Alpha value was at the level of .80, indicating that the questionnaire was consistent and can be used in subsequent studies.

Location of the Study

The study was conducted in 33 National Schools in the Klang Valley. In other words, the surveyed schools are located within 30 km from the city of Kuala Lumpur. This location was chosen because Klang Valley is the central of Federal Government that started the implementation of SBA, and the assessment system is better than other places. The sampling method was purposive sampling while the sample size in this study were 110 Malay language teachers involved with SBA under KSSR.

Profile of the Respondents

In terms of gender, there were more female teachers (84 people) compared to male teachers (24 people). A total of 58 teachers (52.7%) aged 30-39 years, 33 teachers (30%) aged 40-49 years, 15 teachers (13.6%) aged less than 30 years, and 4 teachers (3.7%) aged over 40 year. This means that simple majority of the teachers were medium young. However 44 teachers (40%) have more than 10 years of teaching experience, 33 teachers (30%) teach 1-5 years, 28 teachers (25.5%) teach 6-10 year, and 5 teachers (4.5%) teach less than a year only.

In terms of ethnicity, the majority (96 teachers; 87.3%) consisted of Malay teachers than 6 (5.5%) Chinese teachers, and only 4 (3.6%) Indian teachers and natives of Sabah and Sarawak respectively. However as many as 43 teachers (39.1%) are not majoring in Malay language. More than half of the 63 teachers (57.3%) have undergraduate degree, whereas other teachers have SPM certificate as the lowest qualification to master degree as the highest one.

5. FINDINGS

Research question 1: How was the skill readiness of National School' teachers in implementation of SBA?

Table 1:
Readiness of Malay Language Teachers at National Schools in terms of skills on SBA

N	ITEMS	SD	D	UC	A	3A	M & SD
1	SBA Training / courses helped me acquire skills	0 0.0%	13 11.8%	16 14.5%	63 57.3%	18 16.4%	3.78 .86
2	Internal courses provided me basic information to convey SBA implementation	0 0.0%	9 8.2%	18 16.4%	73 66.3%	10 9.1%	3.76 .73
3	Implementation of the SBA successful communicated to all teachers through various channels	0 0.0%	12 10.9%	35 31.8%	57 51.8%	6 5.5%	3.52 .76
4	I get adequate assistance and guidance from mentors for implementing SBA	1 0.9%	12 10.9%	39 35.5%	51 46.3%	7 6.4%	3.46 .80
5	ICT and online facilities greatly simplifies my work in teaching	31 28.2%	37 33.6%	23 20.9%	17 15.5%	2 1.8%	2.29 .09
6	Preparation of various instrument does not burden me	12 10.9%	29 26.4%	39 35.5%	27 24.5%	3 2.7%	2.82 .02
7	I need more time to prepare an instrument of SBA	1 0.9%	3 2.7%	20 18.2%	58 52.7%	1 0.9%	4.85 .09
8	I prepare questions of SBA according to individual abilities of pupils	0 0.0%	8 7.3%	19 17.3%	72 65.5%	11 10.0%	3.78 .72
9	Preparation instrument of SBA at my school have been adjusted according to the flow of subjects	0 0.0%	10 9.1%	31 28.2%	61 55.4%	8 7.3%	3.61 .76
10	I always diversify the assessment of SBA to test the learning ability of pupils based on topic	1 0.9%	6 5.5%	15 13.6%	79 71.8%	9 8.2%	3.81 .69

Table 1 shows that as many as 59 teachers (53.6%) need more time to prepare an assessment instrument of SBA (M4.85, SD.09). Many teachers (80; 80%) has been diversifying the assessment of SBA to test the learning ability of pupils based on topic (3.81, SD.69), means that

they set different types of test to measure the pupils' performance from topic to topic. In addition, 81 teachers (73.7%) perceived that SBA Training/courses helped them to acquire the skills (3.78, *SD*.86).

On the other hand, a total of 68 teachers (61.8%) did not agree that the IT and online facilities greatly facilitate their work (2.29, *SD*.09). A total of 41 teachers (37.3%) did not agree that the preparation of various instrument did not burden them.

Research question 2: Was there any relationship between the teaching experiences of the Malay language teachers at National Schools with their skills in implementing the SBA?

The Pearson correlation coefficient between teaching experience and skills in SBA was at -0.18 , $p = .04$, showed significant relationship between the two. Overall the more experiences the Malay language teachers are, the more skills they have in implementing SBA.

6. DISCUSSION

According to the theory of Taba¹⁶, teachers who goes through the process of teaching and learning have experiences of teaching and learning skills at the first place so the teachers can present content with a good and effective teaching method. This theory is consistent with the findings that have been conducted.

Based on the readiness of Malay language teachers in National School in terms of skills, the analysis showed that most teachers were prepared with specific skills to perform basic SBA especially those are experienced. Most teachers also have confidence in implementing the SBA because of the skills that have helped them to perform their duties properly.

However, most teachers expressed their displeasure study on the use of ICT in teaching and learning. These factors caused by the provision of infrastructure and facilities are inadequate in schools. Such situation impedes the efforts of teachers in the use of this technology to the pupils. Studies done by many researches^{1,10,17} proven that the teachers' skills is an Important factor in determining pupils' achievement. The change in attitude toward ICT skills are needed by a teacher. In this context, it is closely related to the use of computers by teachers. Computer use is an important resource in helping teachers to achieve pedagogical objectives. The use of computers also give pupils the opportunity to try out new ways of learning in line with the 21st century millennium. Now usage of computers become more important due to the rapid advancement in technology development in Malaysia, so for the less knowledgeable in the field of ICT, they should strive to achieve such progress¹⁸.

On the other hand, the findings showed that majority of teachers need more time to prepare an assessment

instrument of SBA (M4.85, *SD*.09). This situation exists because SBA is formative assessment of all time, and is burdensome because each teacher should formulate their tests and questions according to the level of the pupils and their classes. Therefore, they had to diversify the SBA evaluation to test the ability of pupils' learning based on topics (3.81, *SD*.69). Although most teachers acquire skills through SBA training or courses (3.78, *SD*.86), they are having trouble filling marks online for their work.

Weaknesses in skills aspect was related to the construction of assessment instruments or assessments to measure pupils' ability levels. SBA requires holistic assessment or evaluation in accordance with pupils' ability. In other words, the construction of the instrument by teachers need various levels and needs. However, due to constraints of time and energy to do other works have made difficulty for teachers to meet this requirement. This finding was found similar to Suseela and Hoon¹⁹ whose analysis revealed three major themes in implementing SBA: insufficient guidelines on the implementation process, lack of teachers' knowledge base, and lack of external monitoring of school-based.

Efforts have been made to improve, enhance and strengthen the country's education system, multiple assessment is a method that can provide a form of assessment in finding the overall potential of pupils in the aspects of physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual²⁰. To overcome the problems that arise will not only have to be borne by the teachers, but it would require the coupling of various parties, especially the academic supervisors, respective committees, subject teachers and so on.

On the other hand, informed decisions can be made while planning for the in-service teacher trainings on SBA. Similar to the finding by Somchit et.al²¹, this study suggests a need for more focused, comprehensive and ongoing mentor training for mentor teachers. The success of this would require collaboration between all stakeholders involved in departments of education and National Schools. Developing teachers' knowledge about assessing Malay language is critical for achieving intended policy outcomes of improving teaching especially those all new or junior in teaching line²².

This study also showed that teachers have experiences in certain skills will be enough to help pupils to achieve the objectives of their teaching. According to Wahid and Jahya²³, skills stack occurs through experiences that occur either vicariously, through readings, discussions, meetings and similar intellectual. This proves that the skills aspect is one of the important aspects that need to be addressed by teachers for effectiveness in implementing SBA.

Normally teachers' skills and excellence is measured by the period of their working experience in the areas they operate. Experience duration of a teacher enable to influence their willingness in the process of teaching and learning. Experiences of the teachers and meet the needs of pupils can help them to achieve the learning objectives that involve abilities, skills, talents and interests of pupils.

According to Kim et.al.²², the accumulation of experiences occur either vicariously, through reading, period of teaching time, various intellectual meetings and so forth. This is an experience that accumulate as daily routine and lead to piles of skills, attitudes, interests that could lead to the achievement of the objectives of teaching and learning.

Based on the analysis of the correlation, the results showed there was significant correlation between teaching experiences of the Malay language teacher in SBA with their skills ($r = -.18, p = .04$) to implement SBA. Analysis has earned the similarity with a study conducted by Sanitah and Norsiwati¹¹ who found a close correlation between the experiences of teaching Mathematics Year One with their skill in performing the SBA under KSSR.

They study revealed the importance to train the Malay Language teachers the skills in implementing SBA, especially use of technology (IT) in teaching and learning. They need to be equipped with professional training of setting various type of assessment instrument to help to enlighten their work load as well.

The renovation of curricula and program is not a short-term effort but a long process, lasting for years. According to Taba¹⁶, school curricula and program, are more likely to be effectively rearranged if, instead of the common way of administrative reorganization — from top to bottom—a well-founded and coordinated system of development from bottom to top can be used. Therefore, the feedback gathered from the teachers as well as the pupils should be able to provide relevant information to the ministry in order to do the necessary changes and modifications to the existing assessment's policies and guidelines.

5. CONCLUSIONS

In summary, the study showed the skill readiness of teachers is a factor that plays an important role for the success of the SBA policy that have been enacted by the government. In other words, teachers need to equip themselves and get ready with certain skill aspects before implementing teaching and learning to the pupils. They also need to create lesson plans and determine teaching and learning objectives to ensure the direction of pupils at the end of the teaching being forced as quickly as possible. Therefore, the cooperation of senior teachers, supervisors, and administrators is important to ensure the implementation of the SBA achieve its noble goals.

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