

# The Development of Education Management Policy Plan for B40 Students in Communicative English Classes in Polytechnic

Jennifer Sukor @ John, and Maslawati Mohamad

**Abstract** – The goal of this study is to determine the effectiveness of education management systems in polytechnics for Communicative English courses and their influence on B40 students. The study of Communicative English (CE) was officially added to the English curriculum in the year 2010. Aspects of educational practises and how they assist children in the B40 group are also discussed. Malaysians are divided into three groups based on their household income: the poorest 40% have household incomes that are less than the required amount, the middle 40% have household incomes that are higher than the required amount, and the top 20% have household incomes that are greater than the necessary amount. With a focus on technical and vocational education and training, which includes polytechnic education, the Malaysian government hopes to provide access to higher education for the under-40 percent of the population in order to develop skilled human capital and transform them into the middle 40 percent of the population. An investigation of the Malaysia Education Management Policy and Plan for Polytechnics, as well as an assessment of the effect of Communicative English on B40 students, are the objectives of this conceptual study. The goals of this conceptual paper are to be further developed by a full investigation of the polytechnic education management policy and as well as whether Communicative English is a success among B40 students.

**Keywords** – Education management plans, communicative English, B40 students, polytechnic

## I. INTRODUCTION

Different countries have planned and implemented various education management plans and policies that regulate and holistically define the structure and components of the educational system (Da Wan et al., 2018). This study analyses the development and initiatives taken by the Malaysian government in the context of education management policies in terms of polytechnic programs that aim to enhance the effectiveness of the communicative English classes. The educational institutes of Malaysia are governed by the ministry of higher education and cover the public universities, polytechnics, and different institutes.

The higher education sector of Malaysia has developed a number of technical and vocational education and training programs intending to deliver capable and competent individuals.

The department of polytechnic education serves to establish a knowledge society and economy that would consequently

boost the country's development. Since the 2000s, the Malaysian government has developed different plans for closing the gaps in the education sector such as the education development master plan and the national higher education strategic plan. The various educational plans were developed to contribute to the state agenda programs for instance the 1Malaysia initiative, and the economic and government transformation program.

The Malaysian education system has equally focused on the importance of English at every level such as primary, secondary, and tertiary education as a compulsory subject along with the incorporation of other subject areas and courses as well (Ramiza & Peter, 2013). Several different approaches and methods have been utilized to improve and enhance the teaching as well as the learning of the English language in order to adapt and acquire it as the second language of non-native Malaysians which would contribute greatly to building human capital and opening doors of future opportunities, especially for individuals belonging to the middle sector. The English communicative skills majorly add to create value for employability chances but in many countries including Malaysia, despite the dominant focus on English subject areas the proficiency of English communication skills of domestic graduates have not been mastered enough.

The purpose of the polytechnic education that is part of the TVET program is to build skilled individuals for serving in diverse occupations. According to Thivviah et al., (2017) the major goal of polytechnics is to retrain and equipped individuals with employment as well as entrepreneurial skills. The evolving needs of global communication have transformed the English for specific purposes ESP to communicative English CE courses at polytechnics that aim to develop the communication skills for social interactions (Isnin et al., 2018). Malaysian polytechnics have introduced communicative language teaching CLT for the implementation of CE courses. For having a competent workforce excelling in the field of English communication, it is essential to introduce communicative language teaching.

The objective of polytechnic education is not only confined to the static development of individuals but rather to develop a dynamic one that is driven by technological and societal evolutions. It is crucial for polytechnics to cater to the overall requirements of industry, society, and learners. Furthermore, according to the Department of Polytechnic Education, polytechnic education is expected to transform the B40 sector which represents the 40 percent of Malaysians having an income less than RM 4,600 to middle-income 40 percent by getting them access to credible education.

Three different categories exist for the Malaysian citizens that are the bottom 40 percent having household income

Jennifer Sukor @ John, Polytechnic Mukah (PMU), Malaysia (Email address: [jade7877@gmail.com](mailto:jade7877@gmail.com) ).  
Maslawati Mohamad, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia (Email address: [maslawati@ukm.edu.my](mailto:maslawati@ukm.edu.my) ).

below than required needs, the middle 40 percent, and the top 20 percent with more than the required household income (Romeli, 2021). For getting the below 40 percent sector to have access to higher education in order to build skilled human capital and transform them into the middle 40 percent, the Malaysian government has focused on the development of technical and vocational education and training that involves the polytechnic education. Various literature has shown the issues or challenges concerning the implementation of English communicative courses for polytechnic education in the context of different factors such as culture, teacher's and learner's attitudes, and community requirements among others.

## II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Malaysian education system, in fact, does not differentiate between any political party in the country, including students in the B40 group. Dropouts, absenteeism, and low academic success are frequently mentioned in the management of B40 students' education (Julian@Juliana & Mohd Izham, 2020). Many researches have also indicated that B40 students' motivation and attitude toward teaching and learning is not particularly encouraging. Previous studies have also identified a discrepancy in academic accomplishment between B40 students in rural areas and other students in urban areas, and that the low percentage of attendance among B40 students is one of the factors causing such low academic achievement (BPPDP, KPM, 2017). The implementation of English communicative courses for polytechnic education in the context of a variety of aspects, such as culture, teacher and learner attitudes, and community necessities, to name a few, has been the subject of several pieces of research and literature, and these studies have highlighted the concerns or obstacles associated with this implementation.

These are the research issues that will be addressed in this article:

- i. What are the several Malaysian education management policies and plans for polytechnics?
- ii. What is the impact of polytechnic education on communicative English among B40 students?

The objective of this study are:

- i. To explore and gain a detailed understanding of Malaysian education management policies and plans for polytechnics in the context of communicative English classes
- ii. To study and evaluate the impact of polytechnic education policy for communicative English among B40 students

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Education Management Plan*

According to Rumble (2019), the governmental plans and programs are formulated to shape and improve the educational system of the country and holistically define its implementation standards to ensure the effective level of education delivery within a system. Such policies have

broader categorization such as domestic, international, governmental, or non-governmental institutions, etc that act as the primary originators whereas on local levels like private institutions or authorities are considered secondary sources for formulating educational programs. Hence, the educational actors work on the development of plans and policies based on values and innovative ideas as well as their management and implementation by professional education authorities.

The education management plans and policies cover the different levels such as primary, secondary, tertiary, or vocational education. The basic expectation from such policies is the ability to produce standardized educational programs that ensure the efficient learning of students and shape the approaches and methodologies of teachers which requires effective planning and management. Several pieces of literature have explained the variety of differences in educational policies in different countries with the major reason being the level of focus given to development initiatives in the context of education. The polytechnic institutes have existed since the 18th century and with time several modifications have been made to polytechnic and vocational education.

The main purpose of higher education or universities is to build individuals for some particular professions mainly focusing on subject areas like academic and theoretical. Whereas the objective of polytechnic institutes is to build industry-required skills by offering courses on advanced technical education thus its main focus is on making the learners equipped with applied skills. Technical and vocational education caters to the diverse needs of the modern futuristic industry which requires a variety of individuals from skilled, competent, and educational backgrounds (McCrone et al., 2015). Several countries have included polytechnic institutions as part of their higher education system. The significant drivers of polytechnic education are technology, innovation, enhancement of the global economy, and globalization.

### *Polytechnic*

The sector of polytechnic education has become a crucial factor in the development of skilled and competent human capital. In this era of advancements and changes, the objectives and goals of polytechnic have been transformed to align with the national agenda by providing skilled individuals for industries that would enhance economic growth. The polytechnic mainly focuses on the development of skills in the field of technology, engineering, commercial services, commutative, information, and communication technology that significantly contributes to the achievement of various national programs like the Vision 2020 plan of Malaysia. According to Ahmad (2014), not having proper command of the English language is regarded as one of the major issues that result in unemployment.

A number of countries have made the learning of English foreign language EFL a compulsory subject in their education system. English is considered as the global language in the context of educational and professional purposes with over 700 million native speakers and a huge number of speaking it as a second language. According to

Thivviyah et al., (2017), communicative competence is required for a successful social interaction. It involves knowing the information needed for communication and having a strong grip on the speaker and listener's language in order to effectively transfer the knowledge or state your view on the topic. It is not only limited to the concept of just knowing or having the information for communication but rather the capability to present it efficiently for leaving a positive impact. Hence, the communicative English course offered in several polytechnics facilitates the acquiring of related language knowledge and linguistics structure.

### **Communicative English**

Communicative language teaching refers to the development of communication skills in English classes. It emphasizes the use of language for communication with the purpose of building communicative competence among its learners. The understanding of English language proficiency as a communicative need internationally has led to the development of communicative language teaching CLT focusing on building the communication skills of learners.

The various features of CLT include the communication by having social interaction, credible information in-class learning, focusing on both the particular language and the process of learning, encouraging learners to engage in the class activities thus enhancing their personal experiences, and relating the learning components of the language with the outside class language activities (Toro et al., 2019). CLT motivates the involvement of learners in several communicative tasks that would eventually enable them to use it in actual situations. In countries such as Malaysia where English is not the first language, there exist many hurdles for locals in landing international career opportunities thus highlighting the importance of an established method like CLT for learning communicative English skills

The teacher's role in CLT has the responsibility to carry out effective activities and streamline the process of communication language learning by acting independently among the learning groups (Alamri, 2018). The approach of CLT has been made necessary for polytechnic lecturers to teach communicative English. CLT makes the learning of English easy and meaningful, and the majority of teachers of polytechnics have shown a favorable attitude towards its implementation in the CE courses. Therefore, the effectiveness of CLT in classrooms is hugely dependent on the attitude and beliefs of the teacher towards it.

## **IV.METHOD**

### **Research Philosophy**

In the completion of a research study, the selected philosophy for research is a significant factor to consider and it varies according to the required information type. Several research philosophies have been identified such as interpretivism, positivism, and realism, etc. The positivism research philosophy is majorly used for quantitative and qualitative research that covers a huge sample size. In the current research study, the interpretivism research

philosophy has been utilized as it is considered the best option as it covers data collection in large quantity as well as quality too.

### **Research Approach**

Through the research approach, the different variables such as the reasoning for research, data collection, and interpretation are analysed. Inductive and deductive research are the two main approaches while the inductive approach focuses on the development of a new theory through observing and studying existing literature by conducting qualitative research whereas the deductive approach is used for analysis of quantitative data from existing sources and testing the existing theory (Armat et al., 2018). In the present research study, the deductive research approach has been used.

### **Research Design**

For the research study, a number of processes, approaches, and related strategies are utilized by the researcher which comes under the research design area through which the various components are integrated after going through proper analysis and interpretation in order to complete the research study in a concise and accurate manner. Several types of research designs are available such as casual, exploratory, descriptive, explanatory, etc. A descriptive research design has been selected for the present study.

### **Research Strategy**

The research strategy specifies the techniques undertaken by the researcher for the research study. Qualitative and quantitative strategies are the two most used research strategies. In qualitative strategies, the data is collected through primary sources whereas in quantitative strategies usually existing numerical data is collected and analysed through various techniques. For the current research study, both quantitative and qualitative strategy were considered the best option.

### **Data Collection Methods**

A data collection method is defined as the procedure that covers the data collection, analysis, and interpretation of the data which is further converted into useful information that could assist the researcher in answering the objectives and questions of the research study in an effective manner. The collected data is categorized into primary and secondary data.

### **Primary Data**

Primary data is considered as the most important data which greatly assists in effective decision making and analysis that leads to high quality findings within the scope of the study (Snyder, 2019). In the present research study, the sources for the collection of primary data were Malaysian governmental reports and publications regarding polytechnic education and the B40 student community, archive documents, and education management programs over the years.

## Secondary Data

For creating an effective review of the literature, researchers use data collected from secondary sources referred as secondary data. A number of secondary sources such as available articles and journals on the research topic, books, and already conducted literature review in existing research studies were utilized in the present research study.

## Research Ethical Concerns

In order to complete a research study, the researchers are required to follow various ethical concerns that helps in the reduction of problems the researcher and his study might face in the future. In the present study, an ethical concern faced during the collection of information and data which must be accurate, authentic, and reliable as to avoid filling the research study with inaccurate and unreliable information and also the concern of completion of findings with subjective or opinion based information.

## V. FINDINGS

The results of the research showed that 64 percent of the skilled manpower of the country was developed by the polytechnics as after the transformation plan, a 33 percent increase was recorded in the field of TVET. Since the establishment of the first polytechnic in 1969, the ministry of higher education has introduced a number of plans for its transformation with environmental changes. The department of polytechnic education developed a polytechnic transformation plan with the purpose of strengthening the network of polytechnics and emphasizing its importance for technical and vocational education and training (Rasul et al., 2015). It was also intended to change the view of the public towards it by highlighting it as the finest alternative to university education for students aiming for advanced and technological areas. The plan included the programs initiated by the collaboration of both foreign and local institutions to boost the polytechnic department. In terms of the offered courses, the communicative English classes were presented to be approached through the CLT.

No. of Universities	Entrants	Enrolments	Graduates
20	153,470	437,420	104,870
No. of Polytechnics	Entrants	Enrolments	Graduates
27 (Diploma Level)	26,526	60480	19,316
Certificate Level	11,936	25,950	12,110
No. of Polytechnics	Entrants	Enrolments	Graduates
63 (Diploma Level)	431	846	443
Certificate Level	8,714	16,415	7,242
Level	No. of Graduates		%
Degree Holders	104,870 (Universities)		72.8
Diploma Holders	19,759 (Poly & Com. Colleges)		13.7
Certificate Holders	19,352 (Poly & Com. Colleges)		13.5
Total	143,981		100

The above figure gives an overview of the polytechnic situation before the transformation plan. Through the polytechnic education management plan, the certificate level courses were transformed into diploma programs thus making polytechnic popular among the learners in the field of TVET. The Malaysian government contributed majorly by the up-gradation of three different institutions and giving

them the status of the premier polytechnic. Hence, the tenth Malaysian plan was accompanied by several changes in the field of education management by the development of human capital through polytechnics.

The study showed that the ministry of education included different entrepreneurship activities in the polytechnic education for getting them equipped with the skills required for self-employment. The polytechnic institutions include several extra-curricular activities to build entrepreneurship skills among B40 students. It was found that in 2014 about 35 activities engaged more than 40,000 students from the B40 community. The education policy developed in 2014 which included the polytechnic interior entrepreneurship race, and the international communicative program for the English language among many others greatly contributed to the employability of B40 students (Othman & Nasrudin, 2016). The ministry of education has developed an effective system with polytechnic as its dominant part that ensures the development of young people with sustainable knowledge and skills and equal access for everyone, thus preparing them for the competitive environment of today that would help the country in becoming a developed nation.

## VI. DISCUSSION

The research found that Malaysian education blueprint significantly emphasized the importance of polytechnics for TVET. It ensured that the polytechnics are given equal importance and focus as the university-level institutes are enjoying. The ministry of education focused on delivering polytechnic graduates that could meet the advancing industry demands by premiering the TVET programs. Apart from these plans, polytechnic education is considered to close the gap between B40 and M40. The eleventh Malaysian plan has primarily focused on the bottom 40 percent sector and developed plans for the enrolment of B40 students by providing places in polytechnics. The following table shows that almost 70% of the polytechnic students belonged to the bottom 40 percent sector:

YEAR	2012	2013	2014
Household Income (RM)			
< 500	25%	26%	22%
500 - 999	23%	20%	24%
1,000 - 1,999	25%	25%	26%
2,000 - 2,999	10%	11%	11%
3,000 - 3,999	6%	6%	6%
4,000 - 4,999	7%	7%	6%
≥ 5,000	4%	4%	4%

For promoting equality among the three categorizations of Malaysian citizens, different initiatives are taken by the polytechnic for increasing the participation of B40 students in its courses. The program changing the destiny of Malaysian Indian children MDMIC enabled 1,200 students in getting merit based admissions in several tertiary institutions to students that belonged to the Bottom 40% of household income but have credible academic credentials. The polytechnic graduates are expected to increase their household income as almost 80 percent of them are capable

of earning RM 2000 immediately after graduating but within a year could help their household to come out of the poverty line.

## VII. CONCLUSION (OR LIMITATION OR SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDIES)

The research study explored in detail the effect of education management policies and programs on the communicative English classes in polytechnic institutes among the B40 students. In many developing countries including Malaysia, poverty is considered a major hurdle in the accomplishment of national goals as well as a lack of people's access to technical education. It is evident from the findings of the study that the incorporation of communicative courses greatly contributes to reducing the poverty and builds the household income of the bottom 40 Malaysian students.

For teaching the CE courses, various approaches have been developed and one of the widely used approaches is the communicative language teaching approach CLT which aims to provide great assistance and effective strategies to implement the objectives of CE courses in the classroom. The teacher's attitude and beliefs towards the management policies and CLT are dominant factors in the success of such programs. Polytechnic education is regarded as a significant factor in reducing poverty and contributing to employment for B40 students. Also, the education management programs hugely shape the access opportunities of individuals to credible and industry-demanding education.

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