

Exploring Teachers' Descriptive Assessment on Competency, Experience and Workload on School-Based Assessment in Selangor

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Abstract

The school-based assessment was introduced to improve students' outcomes. School-Based Assessment (SBA) or also known as Pentaksiran Berasaskan Sekolah (PBS), is a new holistic form of assessment that assesses cognitive (intellectual), affective (emotional and spiritual), and psychomotor (physical) for primary and secondary school students. The education transformation program of School-Based Assessment (SBA) is consistent with the global trend of continuous education development. It is also parallel to the government of Malaysia's initiatives to produce a greater quality of human capital development. However, through the following years of implementation, grievances regarding the school-based assessment were given the spotlight in major newspapers. Thus, the teachers' thoughts on such assessment should be studied more, along with related variables of interest. Findings on the multistage sampling survey of 333 schoolteachers in Selangor discovered that the teachers were inclined to positive sides of the change. The highest mean was shown by competency, followed by experience and the last is workload. Through the construct of workload, the teachers voted that they disagreed with the time they had with the assessment. The result of this study can provide further insight to the education bodies and policymakers to further strengthen the assessment.

Keywords: School-based Assessment, Pentaksiran Berasaskan Sekolah, Workload, Teachers, Education Change

Introduction

In keeping up with the changing landscape, the education sector has been gradually changing to ensure learning is relevant and not obsolete. Additionally, extensive education reform, which causes uncertainty, often makes teachers hesitant to invest themselves in the implementation (Bryant, 2015). The evidence strongly suggests this issue's adverse spillover effects, especially for the students. For educational change to be successful, certain factors

must be met first. In today's setting, it has become a norm for organizations to change to keep up with the pace and trend of the ever-demanding environment. Research has shown that most efforts failed due to numerous reasons of the unattended and critical contributors to resistance (Rosernberg & Joseph, 2011). The same applies to the context of education transformation programs. For many years, the expedition to find a positive and effective change in educational delivery is still ambiguous (Gilbert, 2013).

In line with the world's shift to decentralized assessment, similar steps were earlier taken by many developed countries in their educational assessment. Today in Malaysia, policymakers and educators view this SBA (School Based Assessment) as a catalyst for education reform (Yuen & Kaur, n.d.). In the past, the former Education Minister also noted that there would be greater reliance on SBA as they are looking for better ways to gauge students' abilities at all levels of education (Musa, 2003). This initiative is supported by MES (Malaysian Examinations Syndicate), which views SBA (School Based Assessment) as a form of assessment that is planned, developed, conducted, examined, and reported by teachers in schools involving students, parents, and other bodies (Adi & Badiozaman, 2007). In addition, SBA (School Based Assessment) will help teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses as it offers flexibility and reliability. The results of this SBA can be seen in today's primary and secondary school assessments.

Over the years, Malaysia has had great needs and efforts to transform the education system to accommodate the rising demand for quality human capital development (Eleventh Malaysia Plan, 2015). The School Based Assessment (SBA), one of the monumental ongoing education transformation programs introduced by the Ministry of Education (MOE), was launched to cater to the ever-growing needs of education by nurturing young minds starting from their early school education. Unfortunately, the SBA program made is not without resistance, especially from the teachers (Naim & Talib, 2014; Idris, Abdullah & Sembak, 2013; Tan, 2010), and it was found that some parts of the assessment were having some weaknesses (Abdullah et al., 2015). Therefore, this research was set to explore the related factors of the assessment: competency, experience, and workload on the teachers' descriptive assessment.

Literature Review

School-Based Assessment

School-Based Assessment (SBA) or also known as Pentaksiran Berasaskan Sekolah (PBS), is a new holistic form of assessment that assesses cognitive (intellectual), affective (emotional and spiritual), and psychomotor (physical) implemented for primary and secondary school students. This assessment is holistic since it evaluates both academic and non-academic performance of the students in line with national education philosophy and primary school standard curriculum (KSSR) as well as secondary school standard curriculum (KSSM), (Lembaga Peperiksaan, 2012). It is designed to nurture students' balance in various aspects. SBA was first implemented for students in Standard 1 in 2011. These students were the first batch to sit the newly revised and enhanced UPSR (Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah) assessment that embedded SBA elements in 2016. The same measure was implemented in Form 1 students in 2012 who underwent the first enhanced PMR (Penilaian Menengah Rendah) assessment in 2014.

Formative assessment is performed parallel to the teaching and learning process. The teachers will design, build, manage, check, record, and report on the evaluation. Additionally, this assessment will be conducted formatively and summatively to understand the student's learning development while improving teaching and learning. Instruments used in this assessment are worksheet, observation, quiz, assignment report checklist, homework, and examination. Meanwhile, a summative evaluation is conducted at the end of every learning unit, term, month, and year. Therefore, this School Based Assessment functions as an "assessment for learning" and "assessment of learning" (Lembaga Peperiksaan, 2012).

The main objectives of this implementation are to; (i) to get an overall picture of individual potential, (ii) to monitor the development of individuals and help to improve their potential, and (iii) to create meaningful individual reports on individual learning (Lembaga Peperiksaan, 2012). As for the assessment characteristics, they are (i) capable of providing a holistic overview of information about the knowledge and skills achieved by students, (ii) continuous and go hand in hand with learning and teaching activities, (iii) flexible assessment method which can be customized according to suitability and readiness of students and (iv) performance standards that are built on standard curriculum (Lembaga Peperiksaan, 2012). Every subject teacher will conduct this assessment continuously during the teaching and learning process.

Teachers' Competency on School-Based Assessment

The teachers' competency is referred to as the competency in implementing the change (Talib et al., 2014). The teachers were having issues with their competency in implementing the new assessment. A study by Naim and Talib (2014) discovered that the teachers lack know how to conduct the assessment. Additionally, they do not have a clear cut on how to appraise and assess the students accordingly, as the new and the previous assessment were somewhat different. The previous study also stressed that the teachers did not clearly understand the grading process and lacked the knowledge and skills to perform the assessment (Hasnida et al., 2012). Most of the teachers lacked competencies, which indirectly affected their attitudes towards implementing the school-based assessment.

Teachers' Experience on School-Based Assessment

The teachers' experience is referred to as the teachers' cumulative working experience in implementing an educational change effort (Naim & Talib, 2014). The teachers expressed their concerns as they lacked the familiarity and affinity to conduct the new assessment. A study found that resistance to change is influenced by an individual's familiarity with a change (Singh et al., 2012). Contrary to this finding, however, it was discovered that even the teachers with experience had difficulties understanding and implementing the assessment (Naim & Talib, 2014). The inconsistency of the findings was further supported by Abdullah et al (2014) on school-based assessment, which found no significant difference between teaching experience and the implementation. However, such finding was derived only from univariate statistical analysis.

Teachers' Workload on School-Based Assessment

The workload is the teachers' current tasks and obligations in carrying out the educational transformation program (Naim & Talib, 2014). The current education landscape is constantly changing as the government tries its best to match the current education system to the final

output to accommodate the changing market prospect. Nonetheless, the spillover effect of such efforts can be seen towards the teachers as they have additional tasks and obligations to adhere to. For instance, the school-based assessment has added the teachers with additional and more extensive tasks (Naim & Talib, 2014). The teachers must rush to complete the syllabus while performing the assessment, which includes periodically online or offline key-in the assessments for record keeping (Talib et al., 2014). Consequently, this will influence their position towards the change. As such, disturbing work patterns were among the significant contributors to attitude on change (Fernandez, 2014). Ultimately, the additional workload has caused the teachers difficulties, dissatisfaction, and emotional lethargies.

Methodology

A multistage sampling technique was conducted in Selangor's selected primary and secondary schools. The technique is common in research that examines organizations in which different units of analysis are "nested" within one another (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). It is also parallel to the study of education setting, which encompassed many levels of units spanning school systems, school states, school districts, classrooms, teachers, and even the students (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). Conducting a sampling technique without addressing the levels of units may cause findings to be biased as only analysis at a specific unit was addressed. The state of Selangor was purposively selected as the sample since Selangor contains the highest number of schools and teachers compared to the other states in Malaysia, as referred to in the data given on the Ministry of Education's website. A total of 366 out of 400 questionnaires were returned. The usable questionnaire fit for analysis response was filtered for monotone, non-response, and criteria not met (practical teachers). The missing value was treated via missing value analysis through the expected maximization technique. Therefore, a total of 333 responses were fit for the subsequent analysis. The response was interpreted via univariate analysis using IBM-SPSS Version 26.

Findings and Analysis

Analysis of Respondents' Profile

The respondents' profiles were analyzed from the usable data (N=333) obtained from the survey. The respondents' profile is shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Respondents' Profile

Demographic	Measurement	Frequency	Percentage (%)
School Level	Primary School	181	54.4
	Secondary School	152	45.6
Gender	Male	94	28.2
	Female	239	71.8
Age	20-29 years old	38	11.4
	30-39 years old	128	38.4
	40-49 years old	113	33.9
	50 years and above	54	16.2
Ethnicity	Malay	275	82.6
	Chinese	14	4.2
	Indian	21	6.3
	Others	23	7
Marital Status	Single	27	8.1
	Married	297	89.2
	Divorced	7	2.1
	Others	2	0.6
Grade	DG32	11	3.3
	DG34	22	6.6
	DG41	139	41.7
	DG44	120	36.0
	DG48	40	12.0
	DG53	1	0.3
Working Experience	1-5 years	42	12.6
	6-10 years	86	25.8
	11-15 years	57	17.1
	16-20 years	61	18.3
	21-25 years	44	13.2
	26-30 years	31	9.3
	31 years and more	12	3.6
Highest Education Level	Certificate	9	2.7
	Diploma	13	3.9
	Bachelor Degree	291	87.4
	Master Degree	20	6.0
Number of Subject(s) Taught	1 Subject	108	32.4
	2 Subjects	127	38.1
	3 Subjects	65	19.5
	4 Subjects and more	33	9.9

Primary school teachers represented the majority of the sample, accounting for 54.4% (181) of the total respondents. Nevertheless, the difference between the number of secondary school teachers and primary school teachers was not profound since secondary school teachers comprised 45.6% (152) of the sample collected. In terms of gender, female school teachers accounted for the largest 71.8% (239) of the sample size, followed by male 28.2%

(94). The majority of the respondents were Malay, 82.6% (275), followed by Others (Kadazan-Dusun & Iban), 7% (23), Indian 6.3% (21), and Chinese 4.2% (14). Based on marital status, it was found that the respondents were married 89.2% (297), single 8.1% (27), divorced 2.1% (7), and 0.6% (2). Meanwhile, most respondents were in Grade, DG41 which made up for 41.7% (139) of the total respondents, followed closely by DG44 with 36% (120). The least was accounted for by DG53, constituting 0.3% (1) of the total respondents. As for working experience, the highest number was 6-10 years, 25.8% (86), while the least accounted for 31 years and more, 3.6% (12). In the aspect of the highest education level, the majority of the teachers were bachelor's degree holders, 87.4% (291), followed by a master's degree, 6% (20), diploma 3.9% (13) and the least by certificate 2.7% (9). Last but not least, the majority of the respondents were teaching two subjects, 38.1% (127), followed by one subject, 32.4% (108), three subjects, 19.5% (65), and four subjects and more 9.9% (33).

Assessment of Instruments' Reliability

The assessment of reliability was made and as shown in Table 2. Overall, the Cronbach's Alpha values for this study ranged from 0.885 to 0.915, which passed the threshold value of 0.7, as mentioned by (Roni, 2015). The composite reliability values were also passed the preferred value of 0.70 portraying good reliability of measurement as the values ranged from 0.920 to 0.947. Additionally, the indicator reliability was measured based on an analysis of outer loadings. The preferred value of 0.70 or higher (Wong, 2013) has also been adhered to as the values ranged from 0.833 to 0.943. Therefore, all the variables passed the minimum threshold value showing good measurements' reliability.

Table 2

Assessment of Instruments' Reliability

Construct	Item	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Competency	Competency 1	0.919	0.915	0.947
	Competency 2	0.943		
	Competency 3	0.912		
Experience	Experience 1	0.912	0.909	0.943
	Experience 2	0.926		
	Experience 3	0.922		
Workload	Workload 1	0.861	0.885	0.920
	Workload 2	0.866		
	Workload 3	0.888		
	Workload 4	0.833		

Analysis of Constructs' Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were calculated to get an overview of the collected data results. The central tendency of each construct was assessed along with their standard deviations to assess their dispersion. A six-point scale from 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (slightly disagree), 4 (slightly agree), 5 (agree) and 6 (strongly agree) was used to measure the items in all the constructs. The overall mean and the standard deviation for the constructs was depicted in Table 3 while the mean and standard deviation for the items is shown in Table 4.

Table 3

Analysis of Constructs' Descriptive Statistics

Construct	Mean	Std. Deviation
Competency	4.630	0.731
Experience	4.684	0.796
Workload	4.173	1.003

*Note: Out of 6-point interval scale.

Based on the analysis of constructs' descriptive statistics, the overall mean per construct in Table 3, it was found that the teachers' responses towards competency, experience, and workload were on the slightly agree side as the values ranged from 4.630 to 4.173. However, the least mean score can be seen on the workload, 4.173.

Table 4

Analysis of Constructs' Descriptive Statistics

Construct	Mean	Std. Deviation
Competency		
I have the competency needed to conduct the assessment.	4.676	.726
I have the knowledge needed to conduct the assessment.	4.676	.696
I have clear understanding about the assessment.	4.538	.770
Experience		
I am satisfied with how my experience prepared me to embrace the assessment.	4.486	.842
I believe that my years of experience as a teacher help me committed in conducted the assessment.	4.820	.743
I believe that my experience with the previous assessment helps me in conducting this assessment.	4.745	.802
Workload		
I have no issue about the tasks and obligations from this assessment.	4.273	.944
I have no issue in completing the syllabus with the new assessment.	4.324	.995
I have no issue with the change in my work patterns when conducting the assessment.	4.321	.919
I have enough time to conduct the assessment.	3.772	1.155

*Note: Out of 6-point interval scale.

Based on Table 4, all the items' means showed that the teachers' responses slightly agreed. However, only one workload item shows that the teachers slightly disagree with the measurement. It shows that the teachers did not have enough time to conduct the assessment. Past studies on the assessment also discovered that the teachers were vocal in expressing their grievances, particularly about the time constraint (Talib et al., 2014).

Although out of the scale of 6, most of the responses are still on the scale of 4 (slightly agree). Do note that the items' construct for the workload scored the least (4.273, 4.324, 4.321, and 3.772) compared to the rest of the items. The findings are parallel to the past findings, which highlighted that the teachers were now added additional tasks and needed to hurry in completing their syllabus to perform the assessment (Talib et al., 2014). Overall, these descriptive findings conform to the past findings (Hasnida et al., 2012; Naim & Talib, 2014).

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study examined teachers' descriptive assessment of competency, experience, and workload on school-based assessment in Selangor. The finding corresponds to the previous studies on how workload affected change. A past study on the same issue discovered that the change had burdened teachers with additional tasks and obligations (Naim & Talib, 2014). Teachers must hurry in completing the syllabus, conducting students' assessments, and enter the data online for record keeping. This impliedly caused a disturbing work pattern among the teachers as they needed to perform more tasks within the same time frame. Additionally, research evidence has shown that disturbed work patterns were a significant contributor to resistance to change (Fernandez, 2014).

Another practical area that can be improved is systematically addressing the human side of change. The precise mechanism of addressing the human side of change remains to be elucidated. Though the findings from this research only provide an initial insight into workload as one of the prominent antecedents to resistance from the human side, the potential effect it may cause is not something that should be left unattended. Past researchers discovered that most of these factors are rooted in the employees' psychological well-being and how the change affects them (Jos et al., 2012). It was mentioned that any significant transformation would create "people issues" (Goskoy, 2016). Accordingly, leaders and followers will be asked to step up with the job changes, and new capabilities and skills must be established, indirectly promoting uncertainty and resistance to change.

In addressing the human side of change, leaders must be reactive to the cases while building up speed, morale, and risk-taking results. Teachers' engagement session needs to be formal with key stakeholders and leaders from beginning to end to ensure everyone is not just involved but participated in the change. Strict discipline is needed in planning and implementing the change to build support and win over the resistance. Overall, a change management approach in addressing the human side should be based on a realistic assessment of the teachers' readiness and capacity to change.

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