

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Malaysia Terengganu in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

IMPLEMENTATION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE CURRICULUM REFORM FOR RURAL SCHOOLS – A CASE STUDY

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MARCH 2022

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In 2016, a curriculum reform for English Language education in Malaysia known as Standard-Based English Language Curriculum (SBELC) was officially implemented in stages nationwide. Research suggests that factors such as training, leadership, motivation, culture, and assessment are influential in curriculum reform and that the implementation of curriculum reform at the classroom level depends mainly on the quality of training, support, and resources given to schools and teachers, as well as their agreement to the reform. However, whether this understanding applies to rural schools in Malaysia remains a question.

This study examines SBELC implementation in rural schools by (1) Investigating rural Sabah teachers' perception of the SBELC curriculum, (2) investigating teachers' experience of SBELC's dissemination process, (3) investigating major factors that are influential in curriculum reform in rural Sabah. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews. The study involved six teachers, two trainers, and an officer from the Curriculum Development Division, Ministry of Education Malaysia.

Findings show that SBELC were well understood and supported by teachers, with cascade training method employed showing signs of dilution. There were also issues of teachers finding the curriculum materials and documents incompatible with their teaching practice and school environment. It was also discovered that the present understanding of curriculum reform largely ignored issues prevalent in rural schools, such as resources & support, which the study found to be pivotal to curriculum reform. The broader implications of the findings for curriculum policymakers and teacher training are also discussed.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Malaysia Terengganu
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PERLAKSANAAN ROMBAKAN KURIKULUM BAHASA INGGERIS DI
SEKOLAH LUAR BANDAR – SATU KAJIAN KES**

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Pada 2016, Kurikulum Standard Bahasa Inggeris telah dirombak, dan dilaksanakan secara berperingkat di seluruh Negara sebagai *Standard-Based English Language Curriculum (SBELC)*. Sorotan literatur menunjukkan bahawa faktor-faktor seperti latihan, kepimpinan, motivasi, budaya dan penilaian memainkan peranan penting dalam rombakan kurikulum, dan kejayaan dalam pelaksanaan rombakan kurikulum di sekolah bergantung kepada kualiti latihan, sokongan dan sumber yang diberikan kepada pihak sekolah dan juga guru-guru. Sokongan guru-guru terhadap kurikulum baru itu sendiri juga penting. Namun, masih belum pasti sekiranya dapatan-dapatan ini boleh digunakan untuk sekolah luar bandar di Malaysia.

Kajian ini menilai pelaksanaan kurikulum SBELC di sekolah luar bandar pedalaman dengan (1) membina gambaran persepsi guru-guru luar bandar Sabah tentang kurikulum SBELC, (2) menyelidiki pengalaman guru-guru luar bandar Sabah sepanjang proses latihan pelaksanaan kurikulum SBELC, (3) menentukan faktor-faktor utama yang memainkan peranan dalam pelaksanaan rombakan kurikulum di luar bandar Sabah. Data dikumpul melalui kaedah temubual separa berstruktur, dan melibatkan enam guru, dua jurulatih kurikulum, dan seorang pegawai dari Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum, Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia.

Dapatan menunjukkan SBELC difahami dengan jelas, disokong guru-guru, dan latihan 'cascade' menunjukkan tanda-tanda kecairan (dilution). Terdapat situasi guru-guru mendapati kandungan dalam kurikulum tidak seberapa sesuai dengan situasi pengajaran mereka. Kajian mendapati bahawa sumber dan sokongan memainkan peranan yang sangat penting untuk rombakan kurikulum di kawasan luar bandar Sabah. Kajian juga mendapati pemahaman sedia ada berkenaan rombakan kurikulum perlu lebih mengambil kira situasi sekolah luar bandar. Implikasi kajian untuk penggubal kurikulum dan Pendidikan guru juga dibincangkan.