

## **The Potential of Dual TVET System Players in Co-curricular Activities – an Approach from Malaysia**

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### **Abstract**

Previously known as extracurriculum, co-curricular activity is an extended activity of classroom-based learning or program which is located outside the educational curriculum. Co-curricular activity are essential in the development of a learner's potential in terms of nurturing national integration, helping to develop community and forming self-identity. A survey was conducted to identify the potential of dual TVET system players and their perception towards the potential of co-curricular activity. The finding shows that the dual TVET system players do have high potential in enhancing the co-curricular activity. The evaluation was made through the co-curricular activity assessment from the four focused aspects that include the attendance, position held, involvement, and achievement. However, there is a significant difference from the perception of dual system trainers towards the potential of the players in co-curricular activities. It is arguable that trainers assume that the players have yet achieved to a satisfactory level in co-curricular activities and require improvement especially in the attendance and position held. As a whole, it is found to illustrate that co-curricular activities implementation had a direct impact on the dual system players' performances. Hence, the co-curricular administrator particularly needs to ensure that the implementation of such activities can help the players to maximize the benefit from the activities held.

**Keywords:** *Co-curricular activity, co-curricular assessment, dual TVET system players, extracurricular*

### **1 The establishment of Vocational Colleges**

In the era of globalisation and the fourth industrial revolution (IR 4.0), technical and vocational education (TVE) is one of the educational sectors to produce skilled laborers that can contribute to the advancement of modern world as well as being competitive globally. A vibrant technological change does not only affect the country's industry and economy, but it also affects the country's education which requires a change in line with rapid growth. At the Malaysian education level, vocational education is being considered as second-class education, because it is devoted to average and middle-class achievers with a strong interest in practical learning. According to Mustapha (2012), the country's vocational education system is said to be uncompetitive and globally lagging behind. Besides, local graduates are also found to be failing to meet their employers' expectations due to lack of critical thinking skills and weak communication skills, which can limit their abilities to go beyond Malaysian borders (Abdullah 2012). Therefore, one of the government initiatives is through the

implementation of the Vocational Education Transformation Plan by upgrading the Vocational Secondary School to a Vocational College (VC) which offers a diploma or advanced diploma course (BPTV 2017).

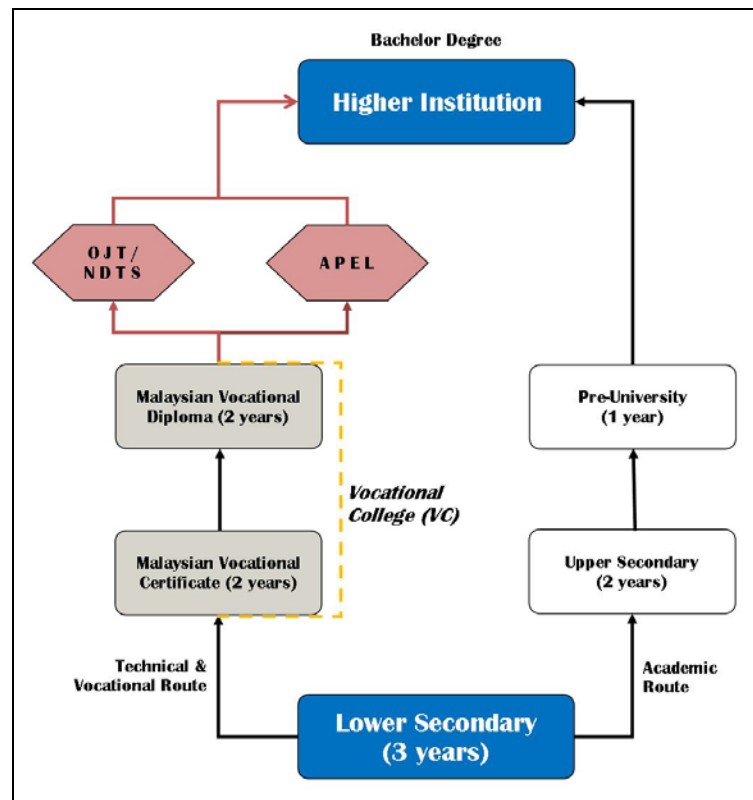


Figure 1: Direction of Malaysian Technical and Vocational Education and Training (BPTV 2017)

Figure 1 shows the direction of Malaysian Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) candidates from lower secondary education towards the labor market before pursuing bachelor degree in higher learning institution. The Vocational Education Transformation Plan was implemented with the aim of creating skilled dual TVET system players that meet the demands and opportunities of the labor market in addressing the challenges of the 21st century. In fact, this transformation not only eliminates the stigma or perception that TVE is the second choice after the academic streamline, but it provides wider and clearer career opportunities.

Enrolment of candidates in VC begins after the lower secondary education level. The learning composition in VC emphasizes more on hands-on experience and reduces academic composition. Candidates whom enroll in VC are given the opportunity to learn in both academic and undergo the experience learning at the actual working environment with the skills learned from the training institution. All these candidates are the dual system TVET players because VC candidates whom implementing the dual system curriculum through

theoretically and practically, compared to other conventional educational curriculum at other types of institutions. In addition, candidates in VC are not limited to diploma or advanced diploma certificates but also recognized certificates such Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) for the knowledge and skills that are relevant and specific to the learning outcomes of a course by a commissioned body, Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA), National Accreditation Board or related ministries (Jabatan Pendidikan Tinggi 2018).

VC candidates will have the opportunity to get the Malaysian Skills Certificate (MSC) up to level 4, if they pass with excellence in the task given. For a student to qualify for MSC of a certain level, students need to go through the On the Job Training (OJT) program or the National Dual Training System (NDTS), which is also known as the Apprenticeship program. OJT is the training deliver to the candidates by performing tasks or processes with supervision that related to their particular career. The training is only after they have finished their learning duration at the training institution and undergo training for at least 3 months. On the other hand, NDTS is a two learning situations training where it took place at the real workplace and training institution. It was conducted through the joint venture between companies and the institutions by Day Release System (e.i. 4 days of practical training at the company and followed by 1 day of theory class at the training institution) or Block Release System (e.i. 3 to 4 months of practical training and followed by 1 to 4 weeks of the theory class). This type of training program is implemented throughout the learning duration.

The implementation of these training programs provides opportunity for the candidates to experience directly and enable them to a better understanding and master their skills as the candidates are monitored by the industry along the industrial training period. However, the students are only eligible to undergo the process of training once they have fulfilled the requirement of the curricular and co-curriculum of the institution. Therefore, it is important for a candidate to master all areas including the co-curricular activities as their mental and physical preparation before conducting training at the actual workplace. But, how the implementation of the co-curriculum can assist candidates in the preparation before undergoing the training process?

## **2 Implementation and assessment of co-curricular learning in TVET programs**

Co-curricular activity is defined as any further planned activities, extension from the teaching and learning process in the classroom that gives learners the opportunity to add, strengthen and practice the knowledge, skills, and values learned (Education Act 1996). It is a very relevant learning activity, which produce active and creative minded learners (Jumelan 2014), foster leadership and team spirit (Buhari 2015), disciplined (Nasbah 2018), and efficient workers (Maamor et al. 2015), which are able to contribute towards businesses and culture of the society (Lateh et al. 2014). These are all skills which are expected by the industry and which mostly cannot be taught through classroom teaching alone. However, graduates from local education system are found to have failed to meet the industry

requirements and cause employers to provide additional training programs to fit them into the scope of work given (Abdullah 2012).

In the Malaysian TVET system, there are two key elements in the education system namely curriculum and co-curriculum where this ‘dual system players’ are exposed to different knowledge, skills, norms, values, cultural aspects and beliefs. Besides, co-curricular activities have also considered as part of the educational curriculum where each of the students needs to be involved. However, learners are not able to experience specific experiences while in the classroom. With co-curricular activities, learners acquire broad knowledge and skills in an experiential manner that will help them in the future (Matthew 2013). Hence, there are of opportunities in experiential learning, which are provided by dual system players (i.e. co-curricular activities – sports, games, outdoor activities, adventure activities) to help them in developing skills such as mental strength, talents and interests, spiritual and physical strength, and social and aesthetic values.

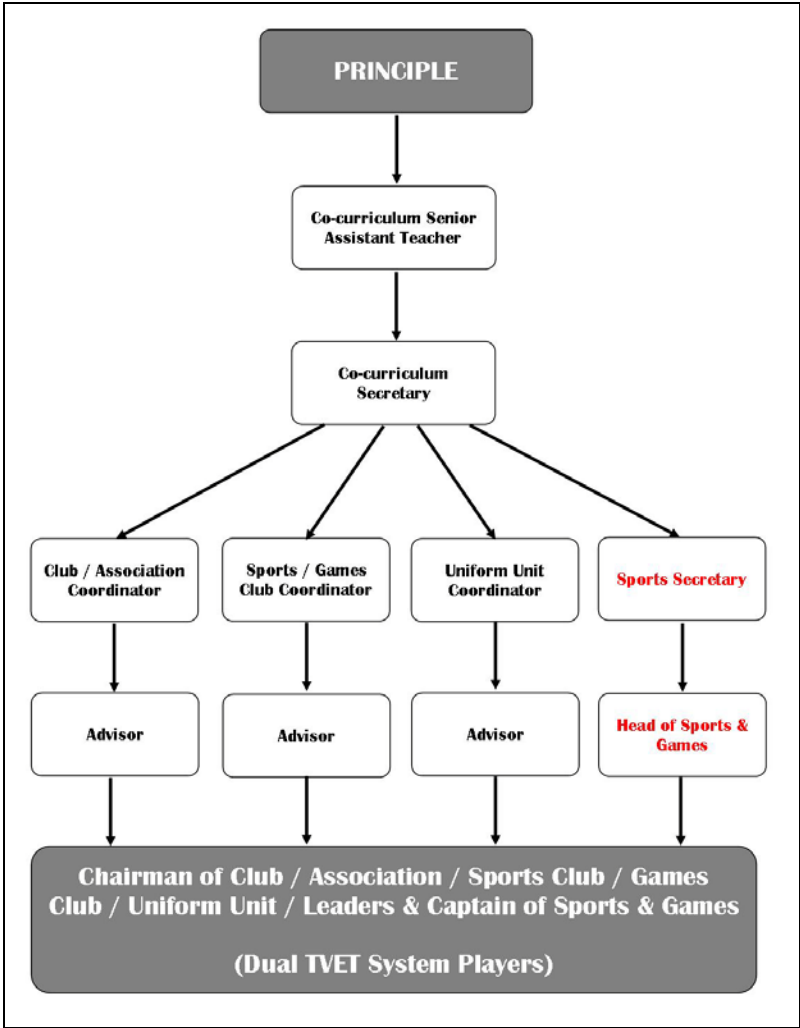


Figure 2: Malaysian Institutional Co-curriculum Management Organization Chart

Figure 2 shows the Malaysian institutional co-curriculum management organization. In the Education Act 1996 (Act 550), it has clarified that the principle of the institution has the power to appoint teachers as the advisor to carry out their duties related to co-curricular activity. A co-curricular management team will be created in order to help the principle to monitor, evaluate, improve, and enhance co-curriculum activities at their respective institutions. Then the advisory teacher of each activity will set up a sub-committee consisting of the institution players to work together implementing the activities planned by the institutional co-curricular management team.

Co-curricular is a holistic activity, other than the academic subjects taught in the classroom. It is also part of the dual TVET system player's education course at the training institution. In the past, co-curricular activity is considered as the activities of leisure time (Maamor et al. 2015). However, co-curricular activity is found to be playing an essential role in Malaysian educational institutions as it has been considered complementary to the curriculum's requirement and needs as well as to provide the opportunities to the learners to acquire advanced skills, extension from the teaching and learning process in the classroom (Fauzee et al. 2002).

## **2.1 Co-curricular Assessment System**

Co-curricular activities are said to be underestimated as no evaluation system can measure players' engagement in the activities as used in measuring the player's academic performance (Adnan & Rahman 2010). With this regard, the Malaysian Ministry of Education (MoE) has introduced an assessment system for the co-curriculum that can be used to measure the level of involvement and achievement of the player in each activity they involved. The initiative in introducing the assessment system is to promote and enhance the dual TVET system players' involvement in co-curricular activities. However, the impact of such efforts does not show a difference in player's participation or inclination towards co-curricular activities.

Based on the preliminary study in VC recently, players participation in each type of the co-curricular activities are determined by the institution as it is to ensure that every activity in VC gets a balanced number of player participated and also facilitates player's movement during the co-curricular session. However, the players are still allowed to engage in any other activity according to their interests or potential of themselves. Other than that, the participation of the players in co-curricular activities is also said to be satisfactory especially in sports and games as well as uniform unit activities, but not for activities from club and associations types where their interest seems to be discouraging.

The dual TVET system players' activity, which is specified by the institution, can influence their involvement on it either positively or negatively. The player also often gives excuses not to attend the co-curricular activity session that has been set-up by the institution. Besides that, the level of involvement of each player in co-curricular activity is influenced by various external factors such as pressure, cultures, abilities and skills which has been identified in the previously (Bahari 2008). Such a situation does not only indicate that there is a lack of

understanding about the concept of co-curricular activities implementation, but the assessment on their participation in which were taken into account also ignored. Such things are said to have happened a lot among the students because they have a broader chance to be exposed to the unbeneficial activities.

The knowledge of assessment methods applied in co-curricular activities is not relevant only to the trainers and the administrator, but also crucial for the players to have a clear understanding of how the assessment being conducted on them. A good result from the assessment shows that a co-curricular management implemented by the institution is able to fulfill the expectations targeted by the MOE (Lebar 2002). However, a poor implementation of co-curricular management will have an impact on the success of the players in mastering various skills that are required for their future (Bakar 2009). In general, the effectiveness of implementation and achievement of the co-curricular activities does not only focused on the degree of involvement of the players but also the trainers and the administrator plays an important role to ensure that players are engaged in co-curricular activities as a whole.

In the preliminary study, the participation and involvement of the dual TVET system players' in co-curricular activities can be said to be at a low level. Hence, the smoothness of the activity implementation will also be affected as there is no seriousness and appreciation in implementing it. As such, the institutional targets through the key performance indicators (KPIs) in co-curricular will not be achieved. Therefore, a survey is conducted to identify the potential of the dual system players from the aspects of their attendance, position held, participation and achievement in co-curricular activities. At the same time, another survey also being conducted from the trainers' perspectives towards the players in co-curricular activities.

### **3 A survey on dual TVET system players and trainers in co-curricular activities**

A survey has been conducted about the trainers and dual TVET system players in co-curricular activities as shown in Table 1. This survey had been conducted to identify the level of understanding and involvement of teachers and players in co-curricular activity conducted at their institution through questionnaires. Data were collected from teachers and players at the three selected vocational college in Johore state concerning the aspects measured in the co-curriculum assessment. All participants were asked four key questions about the co-curricular activity which is the attendance, position held, participation and achievement as these are the indicators of involvement level of each player in a particular activity. Data collected from this survey is 189 responses from teachers and 420 responses from the players.

From the findings, the dual TVET system players are found to have a very high potential in co-curricular activities from the aspect of attendance, position held, participation and achievement. While the trainers responded that the dual system players have a high potential

in co-curricular activities from the aspect of participation and achievement, but not from the aspect of attendance and position held.

**Table 1: Perception of dual system players and trainers towards co-curricular activities**

Aspects focused in co-curricular activities	Level of perspectual	
	Dual System Players'	Trainers'
Attendance	High	Medium
Position held	High	Medium
Participation	High	High
Achievement	High	High
Overall	High	High

### 3.1 Perception of Dual TVET System Players

#### 3.1.1 Co-curricular impact on learning from the aspect of attendance

The potential of dual TVET system players in co-curricular activities from the aspect of their attendancy is seen to be high, because every activities conducted at the institution must be involved by all the players. In Malaysia, there are three types of activity that each player must get involved with, which are the Club/Association (i.e. Social Science Club, Arts Club, Academic Association and English Language Association), Sports/Games Club (i.e. Archery Club, Football Club, Chess Club, and Badminton Club) and Uniform Bodies (i.e. Police Cadet, St. John Ambulance, Red Crescent Association, and Firefighters Association). Each activity is conducted at a predetermined time so that the players may have prepared themselves before the activity session started. Times setting is important and was more effective in facilitating the players, but it does not have any impact on their achievement (Yahaya et al. 2002). However, there are also other factors often associated with attendancy especially the factor of interest, where its impact is tremendous at the level of learning among the players (Juhriyansyah 2010). This means that the factor of interest is vital in determining the player's success in co-curricular activities. Besides, co-curricular activities tend to have a significant impact or changes to the players (Rani 2006). Nevertheless, the types of activities carried out also determine the presence of the player in that particular activity and it symbolises the trainer's competency in carrying out such an activity (Retnam 2007 & Husain et al. 2015). Therefore, the level of players' involvement in co-curricular activity through the attendance aspect alone seems does not reflect changes in the players' achievement.

#### 3.1.2 Co-curricular impact on learning from the aspect of position held

Position held is a term refers to an individual who holds a higher position in the co-curricular activity for the purpose of assisting the teacher to conduct and implement the planned activities (Ministry of Education 2017). The dual TVET system players have shown that they have the potential in co-curricular activities from the aspects of position held. The level of

players' domination in this aspect is different from one another depending on the learning and understanding of the players who also influenced by surrounding factors such as institutional environmental factors (Hasan et al. 2013). A position held by a player in a particular activity indicates that the player has the potential to perform the duties and responsibilities entrusted (Ishak 2003). It can be observed, when players are able to apply their leadership values on their own, the players were confident in managing an organisation very well because they believe co-curricular activities have the abilities in training themselves to conquer the leadership skills (Hamid 2002; Walker 2002). The dual system players are aware of current needs in the leadership of an organization and they are not learning only the leadership skills but also to enhance their self-confidence and courage individually through all those activities (Gunter 2001; Othman & Tahir 2010; Sulaiman 2013). In contrast, players, who are not given the opportunity to hold a position or the player themselves and who choose to be excluded from the activities might have a very low level of domination in this aspect (Esa et al. 2004). Hence, the level of players' domination from the aspects of position held in co-curricular activity is dependent on their personal own understanding of the particular position.

### *3.1.3 Co-curricular impact on learning from the aspect of students' participation*

The dual TVET system players' participation in co-curricular activity shows a high at its potential. Co-curricular activities have been proven to provide various skills needed by a student as well as the dual system player. Players who participated in the co-curricular activities are seen to be able to apply and enhance the skills needed for the students more effectively (Huey 2007; Esa & Jamaludin 2009). The level of the players' participation can also be observed through the achievement obtained and player's ability in completing the task given (Ishak 2011). On the other hand, the lack of involvement in co-curricular activities among the players is a result of the lack of awareness on the importance and contribution they had from the activity (Mohamed 2016). Thereby, players' participation level in co-curricular activities not being able to see through from their achievement obtained, but it depends on the level of awareness on the importance and advantages they will have after they actively participated in the activity they involved.

### *3.1.4 Co-curricular impact on learning from the aspect of students' achievement*

The dual system players' have a good potential in co-curricular activities from the aspect of their achievement. The achievement is based on the assessment results obtained by the player throughout their involvement in all the activities they have joined regardless of knowledge, behaviour, abilities and various other forms of contribution. The result is from the evaluation by the trainers specifically using relevant skills in order to have unbiased judgement on each of the player (Zulkarnain et al. 2011). However, there was also a contradiction from previous studies where players with high self-awareness will motivate themselves to have the abilities in achieving greater success (Ahmad 2003; Makhtar et al. 2015).

Besides, the achievement in co-curricular activities has also been shown to have a positive impact on the academic performance of a particular player (Rahman 2004). In addition, the



motivation of the entire community of an institution to increase is because of the attribute of achievement in the leadership style practised by the leader of the institution (Ghani et al. 2013). Hence, the achievement of its players in an activity is not entirely influenced by the evaluation system of the co-curriculum, but also affected by the effectiveness of leadership style practised in an institution. The leader will not only be capable to encourage their administrator line, but the community surrounding will also be encouraged to achieve the desired excellence.

### **3.2 Trainers' perceptions on co-curricular activity**

Trainers are the teacher or coach that will be the coordinator of activity and conduct the assessment of each player according to the player's involvement, individually. As a whole, the dual system player does have potential in achieving success through their co-curricular activities. However, there's a difference in the perceptions of the trainers on the players' co-curricular activities from the aspect focused in the co-curricular assessment system. It is found that trainers' perception on players' co-curricular activities are lower than the perception of the players themselves. The findings are seen to be in parallel with studies by Hasan et al. (2013), where trainers' perceptions on the players' participation in co-curricular activities demonstrated the domination of the players are at a moderate level. It's argued that trainers' view are assumed that the dual system players are yet to reach at the satisfactory level and improvement is needed especially from the aspect of attendance and position held.

Co-curricular is an essential activity in shaping a balanced person as claimed by the Malaysian National Education Philosophy 1988 (Ministry of Education 1996). It does influence the players' interest towards the activity, effectiveness of implementation on the activity, organised activity planning and systematic assessment which partly are critical aspects that the co-curricular management team should take into account at a particular institution or training places. The players mostly had high potential to succeed in the co-curricular activities according to the aspects evaluated in the co-curricular assessment system. Albeit, it is suggested that the players tend to gain high score in the activities are based on their level of domination in the aspects assessed throughout their involvement in the particular activity. Therefore, they are encouraged to have a better understanding on the execution of the activities they participated at their institution and thus, master those aspects in order to achieve high performances in the whole of co-curricular.

## **4 Conclusion**

Overall, the dual TVET system players are found to have the potential in achieving success in co-curricular activity based on the key aspects assessed in the co-curriculum evaluation. However, there is a difference in the views of the teachers in which the teacher does not fully agree that the students have a high potential to achieve success in co-curriculum. The difference in this finding led to the assumption that each student and teacher had a different

understanding and expectation of co-curriculum activity eventhough the activity was implemented together.

The study has pointed out two other conclusions and to which further research is required. The major conclusion indicates that co-curricular activity, as measured through the co-curriculum assessment, is important to the dual TVET system players in the academic curriculum. The minor conclusion is identifying other factors that may influence the involvement of the players throughout their participation in co-curricular activities at their respective institution.

These findings suggest two related areas for further research. Firstly, the process of monitoring and delivering instruction from the ministry to the institution can be investigated through qualitative research. Secondly, the same research approach can be applied at other Vocational Colleges in other states of Malaysia to make a comparison in terms of the level of involvement of the players in the co-curricular activity.

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