**Technical proposal on:
Public perception (parents and school leavers) of Ministry of
Youth and Sports Skill Training Institutions as a second-class
option and having no job prospect**

Abstract

This proposal is prepared to meet the needs to create policies using
behavioural insights on training programs offered by the Ministry of
Youth and Sports (MYS). The policies are needed to improve the
uptake of training programs offered by the Institut Latihan Kemahiran
Belia dan Sukan (ILKBS - Skills Training Institute of Youth and Sports).

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TECHNICAL PROPOSAL ON:

Public perception (parents and school leavers) of Ministry of Youth and Sports Skill Training Institutions as a second-class option and having no job prospect

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Public perception (parents and school leavers) of Ministry of Youth and Sports Skill Training Institutions as a second-class option and having no job prospect

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This proposal is prepared to meet the needs to create policies regarding training programs offered by the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MYS). The policies are needed to improve the uptake of training programs offered by the Institut Latihan Kemahiran Belia dan Sukan (ILKBS - Skills Training Institute of Youth and Sports). With some of the programs having low enrolment, policy recommendations derived from behavioural insights are proposed to remedy the situation.

The involvement of MYS in youth development is ingrained in its genesis. The Ministry of Youth and Sports was only formed on 15 May 1964 in conjunction with the National Youth Day celebration of that year. In 1972, the Culture Division was established, and this has led the Ministry of Youth and Sports to change its name to the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports until 1987, as the Culture Division was eventually relocated under the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism. Since then, the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports was reverted to its original name in which, today known as the Ministry of Youth and Sports. The mission of enhancing the holistic development of youths in fulfilling the nations' aspiration is manifested in the programs offered by the Bahagian Pembangunan Kemahiran Belia (BPKB)**.**

BKPB is one of the departments within the Ministry that offers practical, hands-on training preparing youth with the requisite skills to join the workforce upon graduation through its ILKBS. There is a total of 22 Institutes throughout the country offering courses ranging from engineering, personal grooming, information technology to hospitality. These institutions have been giving greater emphasis on technical and vocational education and training (TVET).

The Ministry is part of the larger TVET empowerment committee that works on a cross-ministerial basis. They have been working hard to increase the average salary of our TVET graduates, and it has increased by 15 percent. More works needs to be done but it is important that the ministry keep the momentum on TVET as the country progress into a developed nation. Endless effort has been carried out by the Ministry

to improve and enhance ILKBS programmes specifically in term of increasing existing enrolment and improved marketability of the graduates.

2.0 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

There are a total of 1261 TVET providers in Malaysia, consisting of 569 public providers and 692 private providers. Besides the Ministry of Education /Ministry of Higher Education, several other ministries are involved in providing TVET programmes. Being one of the TVET providers, Ministry of Youth and Sports through it 22 Skills Training Institute of Youth and Sports (ILKBS) institutes have been offering many courses ranging from engineering, personal grooming, information technology to hospitality at both diploma and certificate levels.

In many efforts to strengthen TVET to meet the industry demand, the government attempted to elevate TVET image through effective branding and targeted campaigns. This is in line with an immediate effort to increase the numbers of TVET intakes from 194,754 in 2018 to 250,000 in 2025. In moving towards that, many issues, gaps and challenges have been identified such as skills mismatch, under employment, low grades and salary, overlapping programmes, specifically branding issues related to confusion due to various brands, weak images and perceptions towards TVET programmes.

The way forward for TVET is not only focussing on improving quality and responsive TVET programmes but should be on positioning positive image. Behavioural insights case studies can contribute towards designing effective communication and promotional strategies. The proposed study is designed accordingly as initial steps towards meeting that target.

The Secretariat of TVET Coordination Division, Department of Polytechnic and Community College Education in a 12th Malaysian Plan Strategy Paper has identified effective ways, the highest of which is campaign and information about TVET-related careers, to attract teenagers to TVET program. However, this data was based on surveys with existing TVET students. The listed strategies are also lacking of behavioural component which makes it difficult to design behavioural intervention. Moreover, the data is based on self-report. It remains to be tested that such ways are in face effective in increasing enrolment numbers at ILKBS.

3.0 **OBJECTIVE & RESEARCH SCOPE**

The aim of the study is to make policy recommendations regarding the enrolment of students in selected ILKBSs. In line with the Terms of Reference, the specific objectives for this study are to:

1. To measure the perception and attitude of parents and school leavers towards ILKBSs as a training institution and job preparation
2. To characterize the target behavior of concern
3. To design two behavioral interventions.
4. To test the effectiveness of two behavioral interventions among school leavers.

4.0 **STUDY METHODOLOGY**

The behavioral insight approach will be used to identify and specify target behaviors. The output of the behavioral analysis would then be used to design interventions that will be tested using randomized control trials (RCT). A more detailed description of the study packages is as follow.

Phase 1: Baseline study:

This study aims to describe the enrollment at ILKBS based on archival intake data. The data will be analyzed to

1) Examine the pattern of enrollment for different programs and ILKBS
2) identify program that are under-enrolled
3) identify the feeder schools for selected ILKBS

Concurrently, an online survey would be administered to parents and school leavers. A survey will be designed using the Theory of Reasoned Action framework to measure the intention, attitude and perceived social norms of parents and school leavers towards ILKBSs. A link to the survey would be distributed through social media channels. Suitable channels would be used to obtain respondents from a diverse socioeconomic background.

A sample comprising 300 parents and 300 school leavers would be obtained. Descriptive analysis would be used to identify the level of intention, attitude and perceived social norms among parents and school leavers.

Phase 2: Functional Analysis of Target Behavior

The interventions to improve the likelihood of the target behaviors could be determined after a functional analysis is performed. Specifically, the analysis would seek to identify

(1) The antecedents of the behavior

(2) The behavioral variations and dimensions

(3) The consequences of the behavior

The potential target behaviors for this project are:

(1) Submission of ILKBS application form

(2) Acceptance of offer letter

(3) Enrolment at the selected ILKBSs

In order to be able to describe the target behavior in sufficient details, the following two interview studies would be carried out.

(1) The first interviews will be done with existing students of the selected ILKBSs. The interviews would seek to identify the antecedents, diversity and dimensions of behaviors, and the consequences of the behaviors among those who are already enrolled in the institutions. Systematic random sampling will be used (based on list of students in the institutions) to select 10 students from each institution. Semi-structured interviews would be conducted with individual students by trained interviewers. Given the restrictions imposed by Recovery Movement Control Order, the interviews will likely be done via online video platform. Real-time keyword identification, and its elaboration when necessary, will be done to generate a rich description of the target behaviors.

(2) A second set of interviews will be done with school leavers from selected feeder and non-feeder schools for the ILKBSs. The aim of the study is to identify the

barriers to performing the behavior identified in the earlier interviews. The interview will be conducted using the Behavioural Insights Barrier Identification Tool. It will be used to generate a list of capabilities, opportunities and motivation for performing the target behavior.

The focus on feeder and non-feeder school would add to the diversity of cases (enrolled and no enrollment among school alumni). The schools would be selected based on the institutions' record. Schools that have high and low number of students enrolled in the institutions in the past 5 years will be selected. The scope of this selection is limited to schools within the same district as the ILKBS.

Through simple random sampling, two schools from the high-historical enrollment category and two schools from the low-historical category would be selected. From a list of potential TVET students (based on their SPM results i.e. those who are eligible for ILKBS and not exceeding the requirements significantly), 5 school leavers from each school would be selected using systematic random sampling. The interviews would be conducted with individual school leavers by trained interviewers.

Based on these studies, a functional analysis report would be generated. It would identify the important antecedents of the behaviors, the range of behaviors, and their consequences. This report would be used to design a subsequent study.

Phase 3: Experiments on Behavioral Intervention

The selection of suitable intervention for inclusion in this proposal is premature at the present time. The findings from the studies describe above would help to identify the suitable intervention. The interventions chosen would follow the EAST (Easy, Attractive, Social and Timely) framework. Two interventions would be designed and evaluated using a randomized controlled trial protocol. The participants in the RCT studies would be students in form 5 or school leavers depending on the nature of the study.

For the purpose of the proposal, Intervention A (focusing on Easy) and Intervention B (focusing on Social) are described. The target respondents

would be identified (e.g. school leavers from 5 schools). The intervention would be done with at least 100 respondents. Half of the eligible respondents would be randomly assigned to the intervention group while the other half would be in the control group. Based on the random assignment, the characteristics of the respondents will be analyzed so ensure that the two groups are equivalent in terms of sex, SPM results, and social class.

For example, Intervention A involves an application kit that reduces the efforts to submit an application (e.g. minimal form filling requirement). Thus, the respondents in the experimental group would receive the new kit while the other half receive the extant kit. The target behavior in this experiment is the submission of the application form. The percentage of forms returned from respondents in the two groups will be compared using Chi-Square test.

Similarly, in Intervention B, application kit that differs in terms of social norm information (e.g. 5,000 students applied to ILKBS every year!) would be distributed to 100 respondents. Figure below illustrate the research process of the study.

Figure 1: Research Process

5.0 EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The findings from this study will be used as inputs in developing public policy related to enrolment into ILKBSs. Specifically, the findings could be a reference to policy makers from behavioural insights perspective on school leavers preferences towards ILKBSs.

6.0 RISKS

The potential risks identified in this study are as follows:

i) COVID-19 and Movement Control Order may interfere with data collection (e.g. interviews). More important, students' intake may be put on hold due to the MCO. The temporary suspension of intake would delay the window of time for collecting data (i.e. before students are supposed to apply to higher education institutions)

ii) Unable to get full access to data and respondents from KBS officers as a gate keeper.

iii) Unable to have access to admission data into ILKBSs.

iv) Inability to sample the right composition of respondents, example school leavers and parents.

7.0 LIMITATIONS

This study will be carried out based on the selected ILKBSs and programmes as advised by KBS. The institutions and programmes selected will be based on programmes which have experienced lower numbers of enrolment; hence these could be categorised as unpopular programmes as compared to other programmes offered by ILKBSs.

Due to the constraints of resources, this study will use archival data in lieu of behavioural priority study. Thus, the appropriateness of the target behaviour used in the intervention will not be supported by primary empirical data.
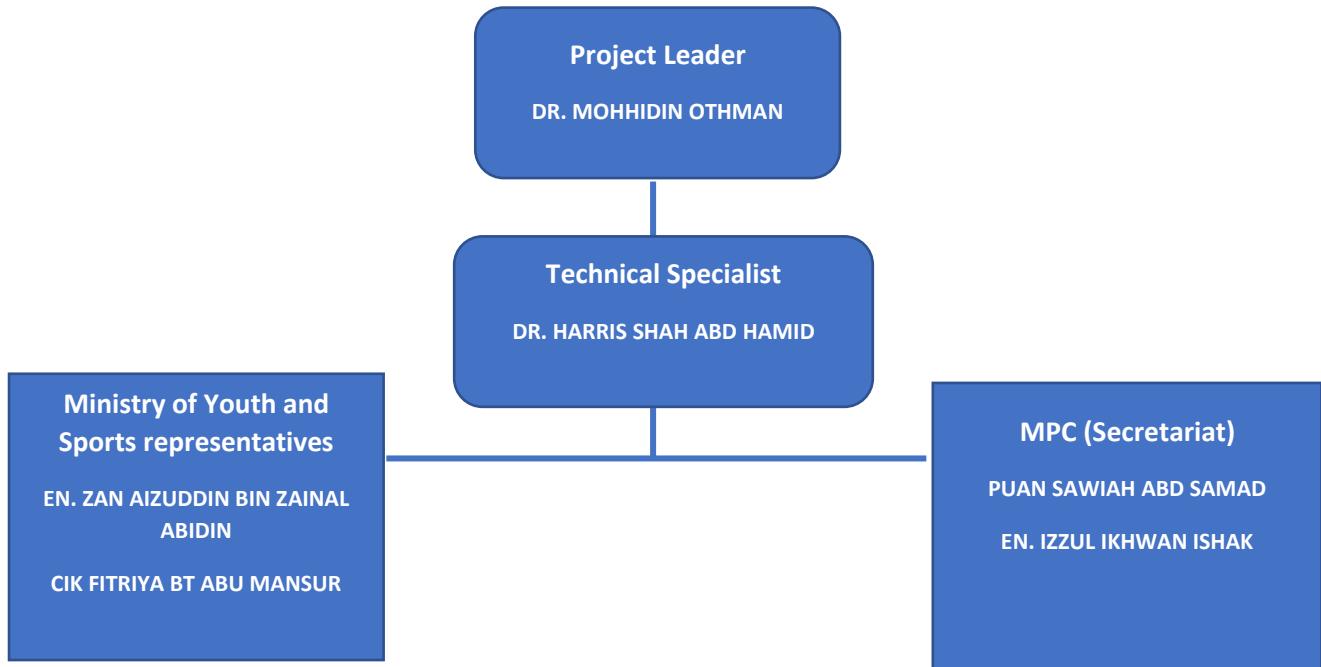
The second limitation is that the study will only involve two interventions. A more comprehensive set of interventions would have a better chance of getting an effective intervention.

8.0 ORGANIZATION OF THE RESEARCH TEAM

A team of researchers and collaborators from variety of background and experiences has been assembled for the purpose of carrying out this study. The list of team members for this project is shown below:

	NAME	ROLE	EXPERTISE
1	DR. MOHHIDIN BIN OTHMAN	PROJECT LEADER	PROJECT MANAGEMENT
2	DR. HARRIS SHAH ABD HAMID	TECHNICAL ADVISOR	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
3	EN. ZAN AIZUDDIN BIN ZAINAL ABIDIN	KBS REPRESENTATIVE/DIRECTOR	TVET PROVIDER
4	EN. SAIFOUL BAHARI SAAD	KBS REPRESENTATIVE/SENIOR ASST. DIRECTOR	TVET PROVIDER
5	CIK FITRIYA BIN ABU MANSUR	KBS REPRESENTATIVE/ASST. DIRECTOR	TVET PROVIDER
6	PUAN SAWIYAH ABD SAMAD	MPC (SECRETARIAT)/DEPUTY DIRECTOR	BI SECRETARIAT
7	EN. IZZUL IKHWAN ISHAK	MPC (SECRETARIAT)/ ASST. MANAGER	BI SECRETARIAT

RESEARCH PROJECT TEAM ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Project Leader

DR. MOHHIDIN OTHMAN

Technical Specialist

DR. HARRIS SHAH ABD HAMID

Ministry of Youth and Sports representatives

EN. ZAN AIZUDDIN BIN ZAINAL ABIDIN

CIK FITRIYA BT ABU MANSUR

MPC (Secretariat)

PUAN SAWIAH ABD SAMAD

EN. IZZUL IKHWAN ISHAK

9.0 PROJECT SCHEDULE

Aktiviti	July 2020				August 2020				September 2020				October 2020				November 2020				December 2020				January 2021				February 2021				March 2021			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Peringkat 1: Preparation/Laporan Awal																																				
1. Team Mobilisation	▓	▓	▓	▓																																
2. Baseline Study			▓	▓	▓																															
3. Develop Method						▓	▓	▓																												
4. Stakeholder Engagement: KBS *									▓																											
5. Phase 1 study										▓	▓	▓	▓																							
Peringkat 2: Data collection/Laporan Interim																																				
1. Phase 2 design													▓	▓																						
2. Stakeholder Engagement: KBS*															▓																					
3. Phase 2 study																	▓	▓	▓	▓																
4. Phase 3 design																					▓	▓														
5. Stakeholder Engagement: KBS*																							▓													
6. Package 3 study																								▓	▓	▓	▓	▓								
Peringkat 3: Rumusan/Laporan Akhir																																				
1. Revision/Updating																													▓	▓						
2. Submit report*																															▓	▓				

Report *