



Inmates' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Technical and Vocational Training (TVET) and Entrepreneurship Training Program

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Abstract: Issues on crime and unemployment among ex-inmates contribute to recidivism in the country even though they were given technical and vocational (TVET) and entrepreneurship training program by the prison authority. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to identify the perception of inmates in prison on the effectiveness of TVET and entrepreneurship training program. The design of the study used in this study was a method of review with a quantitative approach. Data was collected using a set of questionnaires and analyzed using statistical package software for the Social Science (SPSS version 23.0). A total of 222 respondents, inmates who have undergone and are undergoing TVET were involved in the study. The reliability of instruments was at an excellent and effective level with the consistency level of 0.871 and 0.915. Data analysis was done in the form of frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and Pearson correlation test (r). The findings of the study showed that perception of the effectiveness of TVET and entrepreneurship training program in prison was high which the mean value of 4.18 and 4.28 respectively were. In addition, the findings showed that there was a significant relationship between TVET effectiveness and entrepreneurship training program among the respondents, $r=0.557$ ($P \leq 0.01$). In conclusion, the inmates perceived that TVET and entrepreneurship training program in prison are beneficial. Apart from that, it could provide added value in their continuity of survival once released primarily in the field of employment and entrepreneurship activities.

Keywords: Inmates, recidivist, TVET, entrepreneurship, perception

1. Introduction

Malaysia is rapidly developing to become a developed nation by 2050. Various efforts have been and are being pursued to ensure the goals set can be achieved as planned. In line with the goal, skilled and semi-skilled workers need to be produced. This is because they would contribute directly to the development of the country either in the manufacturing, agriculture or service sectors. For that purpose, skilled workers could mostly be developed by exposing workers to technical and vocational training (TVET). The government, through inter-industry collaboration strategy could enhance the effectiveness of various TVET and entrepreneurship skills in every institution including prison institutions. This is because the skills aspects among inmates should be polished in enabling them to build their future and career. TVET program should be able to support inmates' needs to obtain jobs or become entrepreneurs once they are released from jail. This would enable them to own and earn their livings which is believed to reduce the case of

repeated crimes or recidivism. According to Ibrahim et al., (2017), various perceptions among the public suggest that former inmates who are unemployed after being released from prison would tend or incline to repeat the same mistake. Ismail et al., (2021) studies are in line with Rose and Clear (2003) which indicated that the difficulties faced by ex-inmates in getting employment to pursue or continue their survival after being released is due to the community stigma. Rahman and Ahmad (2011) found that entrepreneurship element is the main aspect that should be instilled among individuals who are undergoing treatment at rehabilitation center.

With TVET inmates could have the opportunities to be involved in entrepreneurship field. According to Davis (2013), skills training and education programs could increase inmates' ability in any workforce joined. For that, elements and aspects of entrepreneurship skills should be emphasized. This is because the skills elements in entrepreneurship could assist in the enhancement of their management and skills through self-actualization to build a future career. A study by Ishak et al., (2016), showed that there was a high percentage of inmates who were undergoing TVET in prison had prior experience and was involved in business activities. Their decision to self-employ is most appropriate due to the difficulties of placing themselves in the industry. The Prison Department of Malaysia (JPM) is the responsible department in formulating an effective suitable strategic plan in line with TVET to assist this group to be an innovative workforce. JPM introduced The Human Development Program (PPI) in February 2002, prudently formulated based on dynamic, systematic and comprehensive rehabilitation approach. Currently, the correctional program aspires to produce residents with virtuous personality by enhancing knowledge, shaping attitudes, and improving skill (JPM, 2020). All inmates are obliged to follow this program with the aim of realizing their own mistakes and changing for the better, eventually assist their reintegration into society. The approach used in PPI is based on spiritual psychosocial and empowered with the affirmation of the concept of KASIH (Knowledge, Attitude, Skill, Intelligence and humanity) (JPM, 2020).

The PPI implementation framework begins with Phase I which is the Orientation by implementing the Guidance and Counselling Module as in Figure 1.

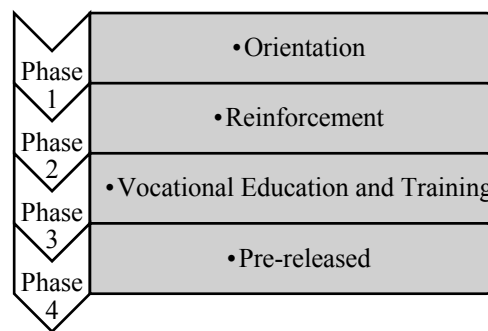


Fig. 1 - Correctional program PPI

This phase focuses on the formation of disciplinary and regulatory compliance, civics, health and personal hygiene. Phase II is the Reinforcement which emphasises on self-identity development which is the core treatment in PPI. In this phase, emphasis is given to aspects of identity formation and behavior change through family-based education and therapy (Pamphlet PPI, 2018). In Phase III or Vocational Education and Training, inmates will be given vocational and entrepreneurship skills training based on the Certified Skills Module, Vocational Module and Joint Venture Model in Prisons. The goal of this phase is to produce skilled and recognized inmates in their respective skill areas. TVET in prison should go beyond employability skills and thus need to apply an integral approach to develop inmates as a whole (Rogers, Simonot & Nartey, 2014). In addition, the Spiritual Module is still used as the core module in this phase. Phase IV is the last phase of PPI which is the Pre-released Phase. The goal of this phase is to prepare inmates reintegrate into society by providing various community programs. This is aimed to encourage ex-inmates to be financially independent and to avoid recidivism.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify perception of inmates on the effectiveness of TVET and entrepreneurship training program at prison, in which they were involved during their time in the prison. Leading to achieve the research purpose, three research questions were formulated as follows:

1. What is the level of effectiveness of TVET program?
2. What is the level of effectiveness of entrepreneurship training program?
3. Is there a relationship between inmates' perceptions of the effectiveness of TVET with entrepreneurship training program?

2. Methodology

The designs used in this study are survey methods using quantitative descriptive approaches. This approach is suitable to be used to study the perception of inmates on the TVET and entrepreneurship training program at prison. This method of survey is a reflection of the phenomenon occurs in the location studied where else the quantitative approach was meant to obtain research data. From the total of 1782 inmates in this prison situated at Southern of Peninsular of

Malaysia, only 222 had and are currently involved with TVET and entrepreneurship training program. A pilot study was done to determine the reliability of the instrument. Respondents for the pilot study were 30 inmates who have undergone TVET in prison and the other 192 respondents were selected as samples for actual study. They were given questionnaires to obtain feedback as samples in the study. According to Chua (2006), sample is a number of subjects from a population to be used as respondents in a study. In this study, the sample was a group of respondents who became representatives of the total number of inmates who were undergoing TVET at the prison during their correctional process.

2.1 Instruments

The main instrument used in this study was questionnaires. Questionnaires was chosen to be the instrument in this research because it is easy to control to get cooperation from respondents, clear and orderly (Walonick, 2005). The content of the questionnaires is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 - Questionnaires contents

Part	Item	Number of Item
A	Respondent Background	4
B	Inmates perception on TVET effectiveness	10
C	Inmates perception on entrepreneurship skills training	10

Table 2 explains the contents of questionnaires which is divided into three parts, namely section A, B and C. Part A is on the respondent's background information, while section B relates to the perception of inmates on the effectiveness of TVET and part C is related to the inmate's perception on entrepreneurship training program. The questionnaire contained 24 questions. Researcher chose to develop a questionnaire using a scale of Likert 5 points i.e. Highly Disagree (STS), Disagree (TS), Less Agree (KS), Agree (S) and Highly Agree (SS). Therefore, this scale is in accordance with the objectives of this study. Part B was fully constructed by researchers and part C was adapted from a study made by Lee and Rahim (2012) which validity was tested by 3 experts in the field of TVET and entrepreneurship.

Table 2 - Pilot study statistical analysis of alpha cronbach

Part	Item	Cronbach Alpha	Reliability level
Part B	Inmates perception on TVET effectiveness	0.871	Very good and effective with high level of consistency
Part C	Inmates perception on entrepreneurship skills training	0.915	Very good and effective with high level of consistency

The results of the pilot study showed that item B and C had a very good and effective reliability level with a high level of consistency with α value respectively 0.871 and 0.915 as in Table 3. This indicated that all the items submitted in this instrument could be used because the value of Alpha Cronbach is not less than 0.60 (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000). Data collected was analyzed using *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)* version 23.0. The analysis used includes descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage and mean. According to Chua (2008), descriptive analysis is used to describe the relationship between variables. Descriptive analysis is also used to describe the chosen sample characteristics of the population. In addition, Pearson correlation analysis test was also carried out to determine the existence of significant relationship between TVET and entrepreneurship training program.

3. Result and Discussion

This section discusses research findings and discussion.

3.1 Respondent's Background

A total of 192 respondents involved in this study. Table 3 shows the analysis respondents' age. Majority of the respondents aged 31 and above, 120 respondents (62.5%) and followed by 26-30 years old (54 respondents, 28.1%). Respondents under the age of 20 were the least (4 respondents, 2.1%) and 21-25 years old, were 14 respondents (7.3%).

Table 3 - Respondents' age distribution

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
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Under 20 years old	4	2.1
21-25 years	14	7.3
26-30 years	54	28.1
31 years and above	120	62.5
Total	192	100.0

Results showed that Malay respondents dominated the study i.e. 100 respondents (52.1%), followed by Chinese, 36 (18.8%), Indians, 25 (13%) and others, 31 (16.1%). The other races were composed of Bajau, 8 (4.2%), Bidayuh, 3 (1.6%) and Brunei, 2 (1%). For races such as Dayak, Philippines, Ibans, Indonesia, Kadazan and others, each showed a frequency of 1(0.5%). The findings also showed that unmarried respondents recorded the highest frequency i.e. 99 (51.6%), followed by married respondents, 62 (32.3%) and widowers recorded the lowest, 31 (16.1%). In addition, the findings found that majority of the respondent education level were SPM, 83 respondents (43.2%), followed by UPSR, 48 (25.0%) and PMR/PT3, 24 (12.5%). There were 5 (2.6%) respondents with STPM, 9 (4.7%) degree holders and 8 (4.2%) with other education backgrounds, 1(0.5%) certificate level, Masters, Doctor of Philosophy and others respectively as shown in Table 4.

Table 4 - Respondents' academic level

Level	Frequency (respondent)	Percentage (%)
UPSR	48	25.0
PMR/PT3	24	12.5
SPM	83	43.2
STPM	5	2.6
Diploma	15	7.8
Degree	9	4.7
Others	8	4.2
Total	192	100.0

3.2 The Perception of Inmates on the Effectiveness of TVET

Based on the analysis done, answer to the item "Instructors have high skills in the field taught" was given the highest scored by respondents with the highest mean and a value of 4.26 (SD=0.761) as compared to the other items, followed by the item "I easily understand the instructor's direction" with a high mean score of 4.25 (SD=0.671) as shown in Table 5.

Table 5 - Analysis on TVET effectiveness

No.	Item	Mean	S.D.	Mean level
1	I easily understand the instructor's direction	4.25	0.671	High
2	I could learn the skills taught easily	4.16	0.668	High
3	Instructors use easy-to-understand language when teaching	4.22	0.697	High
4	I am able to do every given task easily	4.13	0.654	High
5	Instructors have high skills in the field taught	4.26	0.761	High
6	I am able to do the measuring work accurately	4.16	0.781	High
7	Skills taught made me to have interest in the field	4.22	0.721	High
8	I am able to innovate existing product	4.11	0.677	High
9	I am able complete a product within a predetermined time	4.15	0.716	High
10	I can master the skills taught	4.18	0.711	High
	Total	4.18		High

Item on "Instructors use easy-to-understand language when teaching" and "Skills taught made me to have interest in the field" showed the same mean score of 4.22, and each showing the value of standard deviation of 0.697 and 0.721. The assessment of the high mean scored on the items indicated that the perception of the inmates on TVET is effective. Through prison reform, inmates would have the opportunity to obtain certification in certified training skills such as Malaysian Skills Certificate (SKM) through the National Dual Training System (SLDN), Certificate of Skills Proficiency (SKK), Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) and short-term basic skills certificate. Since 2012 to 2018, a total of 14924 inmates were successfully certified through skills training (KDN, 2019). As such, the effectiveness of TVET in prison would open opportunities to inmates to get a place in the employment industry.

The analysis also found that item "I am able to innovate existing product" also showed the lowest mean score of 4.11 (SD=0.677) and followed by the item " I am able to do every given task easily" with mean score of 4.13 (SD=0.654).

This showed that the inmates' effort to seek employment opportunities in the industry once they are released from prison could be easier. Apart from that, as reported by KDN (KDN, 2019) cooperation program of private sectors through Cooperate Smart Internship (CSI) has a significant impact on the residents of prison (KDN, 2019). Inmates have the opportunity to gain skills in various employment through theoretical and practical training provided by private sectors. The conferment of skills certificate to the inmates are to ensure permanent employment opportunities once they are released. The item, "I am able complete a product within a predetermined time" (SD=0.716) showed a mean score of 4.15 and followed by items "I am able to master skills taught" and "I am able to do the measuring work accurately" showed the same mean score of 4.16 (SD=0.668). Finally, the item "I can master the skills taught" is also at a high level with the mean score of 4.18 (SD=0.711). As a whole, although there is a mean difference in each item, the assessment of the mean score for all the items is still at a high level. The overall mean value of the perception is that the effectiveness of TVET is high at 4.18 as shown in Table 6.

Based on this, inmates could increase their productivity once they pursued TVET. Through the implementation of Cooperate Smart Internship Program (CSI) conducted in 2016, a total of 2928 inmates have benefited from the program (KDN, 2019). A total of 80 private companies' participation across the country proved a strong growth in collaboration with JPM. Through vocational skills training in prison, the inmates would have the opportunity to work in private industries involved in the CSI program. According to a lecturer from the prison, through the program, inmates should not worry in seeking opportunities and to start anew like others. Furthermore, certificates obtained from some of the offered programs offered are recognized and their status as ex-inmates will not be stated in the certificate. Therefore, the effectiveness of vocational skills training should enable inmates to seek employment opportunities in the industry.

3.3 The Perception of Inmates on the Effectiveness of Entrepreneurship Training Program

The analysis results showed item "I would earnestly look for new ideas to keep my business successful" had the highest mean score of 4.36 (SD=0.624). Item "I am sure my business will be successful" and "I am trustworthy" showed a high mean score of 4.33 (SD=0.649) as shown in Table 6.

Table 6 - Analysis on effectiveness of entrepreneurship training program

No	Item	Mean	S.D.	Mean level
1	I have a high effort in business	4.30	0.709	High
2	I am willing to take high risks in business	4.20	0.754	High
3	I am willing to sacrifice to keep my business successful	4.31	0.652	High
4	I am business innovative minded	4.21	0.621	High
5	I have the ability to solve business marketing problems	4.21	0.687	High
6	I always grab business opportunity	4.27	0.622	High
7	I am sure my business will be successful	4.33	0.649	High
8	I responded positively to business challenges	4.26	0.633	High
9	I would earnestly look for new ideas to keep my business successful	4.36	0.624	High
10	I am trustworthy	4.33	0.747	High
	Total	4.28		High

This signified the respondents' confidence in entrepreneurship training program. According to Lee and Rahim (2012), confidence is one of the characteristics of entrepreneurship. In addition, entrepreneurship is a process of creating, conducting and doing business through the personality of an entrepreneur (Mubarak, Abdul Rahman & Yaacob, 2014). According to an officer of the prison, cases on recidivism happened when ex-inmates were sidelined in employment. Furthermore, it was hard for private sector employers to employ ex-inmates following the negative stigma that they would repeat their past offences. Therefore, to develop and position themselves in the society any professional skills and added values are very much required and should be acquired by the inmates.

The study showed a low mean score of 4.20 (SD=0.754) on the item "I am willing to take high risks in business" followed by "I am business innovative minded" and "I have the ability to solve business marketing problems" with mean score 4.21 (SD=0.621, SD=0.687). The data analysis also showed the mean score of 4.26 (SD=0.633) on the item "I responded positively to business challenges" and followed by the item "I always grab business opportunity" with mean score of 4.27 (SD=0.622). Based on this finding, respondents showed that there was entrepreneurship skills effectiveness in prison. On the whole, the mean score in the findings of this study was high even though there was a mean difference in each item of 4.28 as at Table 7. Therefore, the inmates' choice to start their own business when released is accurate. According to Miat (2014), entrepreneurship is a potential career to be explored to reduce unemployment problem among Malaysians. Hence with regards to inmates, with the collaboration of MARA and MDEC, they would have more opportunities to start anew and a more productive life.

3.4 Relationship between TVET Effectiveness and Entrepreneurship Training Program in Prison

The outcome of this study showed that the effectiveness of entrepreneurship training program is higher than the effectiveness of TVET program in prison. This finding also showed that inmates were more inclined to entrepreneurship training program than TVET. Pearson correlation analysis which was used to identify the significant relationships between TVET and entrepreneurship training program among the inmates showed a value of $r=0.577$. Findings of the Pearson correlation test (r) showed that there was a significant relationship between TVET and entrepreneurship training program, $r = 0.557$ ($P \leq 0.01$) at level 0.01. This significant relationship implies the effectiveness of TVET and the entrepreneurship training program in prison are interconnecting and influencing each other. There are four TVET programs in prison, namely furniture manufacturing training skills, handicraft, sewing and the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) programs which are aimed at preparing the inmates to be skillful and marketable entrepreneur once they are released. Apart from that, they should be capable to be involved in entrepreneurship field. Salihuddin (2008) found that the level of employability among pre-released inmates is high after undergoing vocational skills training. This is because, TVET also provides opportunities for the inmates to be creative, hence increasing their productivity while entrepreneurship training provides the inmates with means and ways to deal with problems and risk and to be independent in search of income. This could assist the country to become a developed country by 2050.

The findings of Ismail et al., (2021) also showed that there was a significant relationship between entrepreneurship inclinations with the selection of careers of vocational college students. This is in line with the study of Mack, White and Seghor (2019), which showed a significant relationship between the efforts of TVET students in Trinidad and Tobago in making entrepreneurship a career. Mack et al., (2019), also found that there was a significant link between TVET students' exposure and interest in entrepreneurship. Based on these findings, inmates should be able to venture into various opportunities of entrepreneurship. Unemployment among them could be avoided, which would result in them becoming better and socially adaptable.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, results showed that the inmates' perception on the effectiveness of TVET and entrepreneurship training program was at a high level. The findings also showed that there is a significant link between the effectiveness of TVET and entrepreneurship skills among the respondents. With the acquired skills, ex-inmates would be able to place themselves either in the industry or venture into entrepreneurship. The impact of TVET's skills and entrepreneurship skills given to the targeted groups could help the country in reducing recidivations and unemployment rate thus enhancing the country's economy. Even though the result speaks in favor of the PPI program, the value in providing TVET and entrepreneurship skills for the inmates also rely on the post-released life. Hence, the spiritual psychosocial and KASIH concept could possibly be realized in reintegration support program intended to assist successful and sustainable reintegration of inmates economically as well as socially within society. This shows that the implication of approach used in PPI which is based on spiritual psychosocial and empowered with the affirmation concept of KASIH can change inmate into a better person.

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