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EFFECTS OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION PROGRAM ON LIFE EFFECTIVENESS
SKILLS BETWEEN MARA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND
UNIVERSITI PENDIDIKAN SULTAN IDRIS

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ABSTRACT

Research has proven that students produced by the institute of higher education were lack of soft skills, leadership skills, social skills, intellectual level, confident level which is required by the industry. The objective of this study is to examine the effects of outdoor education programs towards students' life effectiveness skills among Sultan Idris Education University and MARA University of Technology. This study also investigates the socio demographic variables differences of life effectiveness skills and identifies outdoor education activity that preferred by the sport science and physical education students who participated in outdoor education program. This study utilized pre-test and post-test quasi experimental design. Life Effectiveness Questionnaire (LEQ- H) was administrated among 256 participants who were chosen as a sample by using purposive sampling. The data were analysed using descriptive analysis, paired sample t- test and MANOVA analysis. The primary findings of this study showed that the outdoor education program contributed significantly influenced the improvement of UiTM and UPSI participants' life effectiveness skills that immerse in camping activity. The result from this study showed that socio demographic variables of experience for UiTM participants had significant effects on achievement motivation. The result also showed that there was a statistically significant difference for overall psychological factor of life effectiveness on length of program for both UiTM and UPSI outdoor education program. The result also showed kayaking activity was the most preferred activity by both of UiTM and UPSI outdoor education participants. The implication of the findings provides evidence on the effectiveness of outdoor education program in improving students' life effectiveness. This study provides useful inputs for Ministry of Higher Education, universities and outdoor education practitioners. This study also provides an empirical data for future study in this field.





KESAN PROGRAM PENDIDIKAN LUAR TERHADAP KEMAHIRAN KEBERKESANAN HIDUP ANTARA UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA DAN UNIVERSITI PENDIDIKAN SULTAN IDRIS

ABSTRAK

Kajian telah membuktikan bahawa graduan yang dihasilkan oleh institut pengajian tinggi kurang dari segi kemahiran insaniah, kemahiran kepimpinan, kemahiran sosial, tahap intelek dan tahap keyakinan yang diperlukan oleh industri. Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji kesan program pendidikan luar terhadap kemahiran keberkesanan hidup dalam kalangan pelajar universiti awam di Malaysia. Kajian ini juga mengkaji perbezaan pembolehubah sosio demografi terhadap kemahiran keberkesanan hidup dan mengenal pasti aktiviti pendidikan luar yang menjadi pilihan pelajar sains sukan dan pendidikan jasmani yang terlibat di dalam program pendidikan luar. Kajian ini menggunakan ujian pra dan ujian pasca reka bentuk eksperimen kuasi. Soal selidik Kemahiran keberkesanan hidup (*LEQ- H*) telah digunakan dalam kalangan 256 peserta yang telah dipilih sebagai sampel dengan menggunakan persampelan bertujuan. Data analisis menggunakan analisis deskriptif, Ujian-t sampel tidak bersandar dan analisis MANOVA. Dapatan utama kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa program pendidikan luar menyumbang kepada kemahiran keberkesanan hidup dalam kalangan peserta UiTM dan UPSI. Hasil daripada kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa pembolehubah sosio demografi pengalaman untuk peserta UiTM mempunyai kesan yang besar ke atas pencapaian motivasi. Hasil kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa terdapat perbezaan statistik yang signifikan bagi faktor psikologi keseluruhan keberkesanan hidup untuk tempoh program pendidikan luar UiTM dan UPSI. Hasil kajian juga menunjukkan aktiviti berkayak adalah aktiviti yang menjadi pilihan oleh kedua-dua peserta pendidikan luar UiTM dan UPSI. Implikasi dapatan membuktikan bahawa pentingnya kewujudan kem pendidikan luar kepada peningkatan kemahiran keberkesanan hidup peserta. Kajian ini menyediakan dapatan yang berguna untuk Kementerian Pengajian Tinggi, universiti dan penggiat rekreasi. Kajian ini juga menyediakan data empirikal untuk kajian masa hadapan dalam bidang ini.



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ELC	Experiential learning cycle
LEQ	Life Effectiveness Questionnaire
MASCA	Malaysia such as Malaysia Canoe Association
OBML	Outward Bound Malaysia in Lumut
PJRM	Persatuan Jurulatih Rekreasi Malaysia
PMM	Persatuan Mendaki Malaysia
PERSEL	Persatuan Rekreasi Selangor
UiTM	Universiti Teknologi MARA
UKM	Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
UPM	Universiti Putra Malaysia
UPSI	Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris





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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION



This first chapter provides an overview on the conducted study. General topics of the research area, research objective, research question, problem statement, definition of term and the significance of the study are described in this chapter. Structure of the dissertation is outlined in the last part of the chapter.

1.1 Background

Recently, the public was shocked by the issue of unemployed graduates. According to media reports, nearly 200,000 graduates fail to get jobs after six months of graduation (Kosmo, 2016). Issues related to the unemployment graduates often spoken by the





community and it can be considered related to the failure of the education system in producing graduates that meet to the needs of industry. Malaysian government also has drafting the third outline perspective plan from the year 1991 to 2020 to focus on the Malaysian development towards developed countries. The national main mission is to develop graduates towards higher income and have a first-class mentality (Iskandar Hasan, 2015). Although several improvements have been implemented to strengthen the graduate employability, but there are still many complaints from the employers about the quality of the graduates especially in terms of personal development.

Outdoor education has long been proposed by researchers as an effective educational subject, method or strategy to promote personal development qualities among youths and student (Brookes, 2006). Outdoor education also improved participants' time management, social competence, task leadership, emotional control, teamwork, self-confidence, cooperation skills, self-esteem and encourages personal responsibility (Allen- Craig and McLeod, 2005; Cooper, 2004). Besides, it was one of the effective methods for getting more students by appealing to more of the variety of multiple intelligences including verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical-rhythmic, naturalist, interpersonal and intrapersonal (Bennets, 2011).

Outdoor education is a method of experiential learning process that is significant for today's student (Rubens, 1997). Outdoor education refers to an individual or a group of people who arranges the activities in environments setting for variety of purpose (Neill, 2008). In line with the definition, Neill (2008) also





described that outdoor education programs involves with the organization of group, multiday expedition relate to the natural settings and highlighting on empirical “pressure inoculation” philosophy. The aims of outdoor education are to develop one’s community and individual, outdoor adventure and ecological commitment abilities (Md Amin, 2010).

According to Rowley (2010), Outdoor education is “education for, in, and about the outdoors, where students are exposed to the outdoors in both natural settings and human made environments”. Outdoor education similarly includes the experimental education process which composed of four essentials that comprise of energetic learner participation in meaningful and stimulating knowledge, replication to the involvement, develop new knowledge and, appliance of this knowledge to new setting (Rowley, 2010)



Thus, by involve students in outdoor education activities will make them to understand the important of each component in outdoor education plus integrate the benefits of outdoor education program into their daily life. This is in line with Khamis (2009), describe that outdoor education program had effect on participants and usually changes in capacity of locus of control self-confidence and self- efficacy.

1.1.1 Outdoor education in Malaysia

Outdoor education program has started in Malaysia since 1952 through the establishment of Outward Bound Malaysia in Lumut (OBML). With their motto is “to





serve, to strive and not to yield” the OBML program provides physical training program for their participant to develop their personal characteristic. The activities that provided by the OBML from hiking, jungle trekking to sailing (Md Amin, Mohd Sani, Ahmad, Azita, Sam Shor Nahar, Azlizam, Jaffry, and Mazuki, 2011). Furthermore, there are many recreation associations were formed in Malaysia to develop a personal characteristic (Md Amin, Azlizam and Jaffry, 2011). There are several of recreation association in Malaysia such as Malaysia Canoe Association (MASCA), Persatuan Jurulatih Rekreasi Malaysia (PJRM), Persatuan Mendaki Malaysia (PMM), Persatuan Rekreasi Selangor (PERSEL).

Therefore, with the existence of a several recreation association in Malaysia it could provide an opportunity for the public citizen to develop their personal characteristic through outdoor education programs. Other than that, these recreation associations also can cooperate with the institute of higher education in the field of outdoor education program with the sharing of theory and experience for example through conference and workshop of outdoor education program.

In Malaysia, formal education started with primary, secondary school followed by post-secondary education then tertiary education for examples diploma, first degree and higher degree qualification. Outdoor education had been offered as an academic subject by several Malaysian universities since 1979. The first university that introduced outdoor education as an academic subject is University Putra Malaysia under Physical Education students followed by, Sultan Idris Education University (UPSI), MARA University of Technology (UiTM) and The National University of Malaysia (UKM) (Md Amin, 2010).





Outdoor education is a compulsory subject for first year students who are majoring in Physical Education or Sports Science Studies in most Malaysia universities. Three hours credit is allocate for outdoor education subject that includes the theoretical and practical classes. Theoretical class cover varies of topics such as history of outdoor education, sport management and first aid. Moreover for the practical class cover all the practical part of outdoor education activities such as orienteering, kayaking, rope activities, hiking and jungle trekking. By the end of semester, an outdoor education program will be conducted by the student to examine the level of knowledge and skills of outdoor education program. One of the key objectives of the camp is to enhance life effectiveness skills among participant.



1.1.2 Life effectiveness

Life effectiveness is the capacity of an individual's to get used to continue life and succeed and it states to how thriving that person able to overcome of life burdens (Neill, 2008). In order to become a successful student they need life effectiveness skills as guideline for them to be success. Life effectiveness is a dimension for people to trust themselves to success in life (Sibthorp and Arthur- Banning, 2004)

Expanding the definition, the author of the life effectiveness questionnaire LEQ-H (Neill, 2000) refers that life effectiveness as personal effectiveness. He later explained how a person with great life effectiveness reacts, performs and thinks in any situations. Researcher believes that Malaysian students in the university level must





have this life effectiveness skill in order to develop personal characteristic and to be successful during period of study and after graduation.

This is in line with Neill (2008), proposed that individual with higher life effectiveness skills is more likely is to achieve success in life. Furthermore Richards, Ellis, and Neill (2002) also describe that life effectiveness outcome is greater than other parallel construct such as self-esteem or self- efficacy. The studies that used life effectiveness questionnaire were mostly implementing towards Outward Bound programmes and among Australian residents. Obviously, these researches on life effectiveness were restricted on school pupils' at Asians countries (Ho, 2003).

Even though the life effectiveness is significance and importance to get greater outcome but debates on "life effectiveness" still been heard and the term itself is very rarely voiced in the psychological literature (Neill, 2008). Thus, studies relating with the outdoor education program and life effectiveness is still lack and this signifies a knowledge gap in Malaysia studies.

1.2 Problem statement

Lately, researchers have proven that students produced by the institute of higher education were lack of knowledge and skills (Ismail, 2012). Besides, researcher also found that the performance and abilities of university students declining slowly in terms of communication skills, self-confidence, thinking skills, problem solving skills as well as the motivation (Ismail, 2012). In addition, studies have shown that there is





inconsistency of the graduates' quality especially in terms of personal, soft skills and knowledge (IPPTN, 2003). As a result, most of the graduates from the university will face the problem of graduates' employability (Ishak, Ismail, and Robiah, 2008). Thus, it is important for university students to involve with outdoor education program in order to enhance personal development and improve knowledge and skills.

Based on the philosophy of national education, the education system should be able to develop potential of students balanced and comprehensive in terms of physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and social (Shahaliza, 2011). However, the achievement on the philosophy of national education is still been query because the today's education system is more focus on academic and based on exam oriented (Md Amin, Azlizam and Jaffry, 2011). To some extent, this situation has affected negative impact and causing of moral issues among students (Shahabuddin, Mahani & Ramlah, 2003). Most of students today are lack of understanding in terms of personal development. This is because their focus is more towards academic specialization and causes them to disregard aspects of personality.

This situation is exacerbated by a variety of reactions towards involvement in outdoor education activities as no positive impact towards students and as non-academic subject (Shahrifuddin, 2002). Even though, outdoor education has good values on interpersonal growth, developed on environmental education and outdoor pursuit but as consequently, this subject is become less important hierarchy especially among institute of higher education (Md Amin et al., 2011).





There are several issues on the development of outdoor education program in the university level which are: (1) the high cost of organizing outdoor education activities; (2) the accident during the outdoor education program; (3) negative perception by some people towards outdoor education program and (4) less exposure on the effectiveness of outdoor education program in the local context (Md Amin et al., 2011). As a result, this issue will have an impact on the implementation of outdoor education program in the university level and indirectly students will not gain the benefits that are available through outdoor education program.

However, there are several studies at the international level found that participation in outdoor education program produced a very positive effect on the domain of participants psychosocial (Neill, 2002), increase self-concept, self-confidence, self-esteem, locus of control (Merrel, 2009; Moore and Russell, 2002; Katy and Heesacker, 2003), increase mental strength, increase decision making skills, general problem solving competencies, academic achievement, improve psychological well-being, emotional stability, achievement motivation, develop ability to overcome challenge, and positively effect on leadership competencies (McLeod and Allen Craig, 2005).

Moreover, the findings in Malaysia also showed a similar pattern, for examples Md Amin (2007) found that outdoor education can act as a catalyst to the formation of the spirit of love for the environment. While Azita (2008) found that outdoor education program improve leadership skills. Furthermore, Jaffry (2008) and Mazuki (2005) found that outdoor education program can nurture unity among the





participants. In addition, the study conducted by Mohd Taib and Norlena (2014) also found that outdoor education program can improve students' soft skills.

These findings of outdoor education program outcome either at local or even international level have shown that outdoor education is very effective in producing skillful and knowledgeable graduates. This is in line with philosophy of national education that required education system should be able to develop potential of students balanced and comprehensive in terms of physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and social (Shahaliza, 2011).

Therefore, a system of education mainly at the university level that offers course of outdoor education program should be reviewed and given more attention.

This is because, many outdoor educators in higher institution believed that outdoor education is one of the best approaches to develop and enhance students' life effectiveness (Neill, 2008). However, the effectiveness of outdoor education in developing students' life effectiveness is debated by several parties (Dack, 2008). Plus the number of research concerning these issues is almost non-existence in Malaysia (Md Amin et al., 2011).

As a result, the effectiveness of outdoor education program in enhancing students' life effectiveness is at stake. In order to focus on this issue, a thorough examination is required to examine the effects of UiTM and UPSI outdoor education program in enhancing life effectiveness skills among university students. The outcomes of the results will provide valuable inputs for Ministry of Higher Education, universities, outdoor education practitioner and students.





1.3 Significant of the Study

This study is the first effort to examine and provide evidence on the effects of outdoor education program on life effectiveness skills between two public universities, MARA University of Technology (UiTM) and Sultan Idris Education University (UPSI). Even though, there is a lot of studies done by the researchers related with life effectiveness skills towards participant (Merrel, 2009; Nail, 2007) but the studies on life effectiveness skills in the local context are still lacks and only a few studies has been done to research the effect of outdoor education program on life effectiveness skills among university students in Malaysia. Outcomes from this study will contribute additional indication on the impact of life effectiveness skills in promoting outdoor education program among university students.



In academic perspective, this study will contribute to the body of knowledge of the outcome on life effectiveness skills among students in outdoor education program in Malaysia. Although, several studies related with outdoor education have been conducted but most of the studies focus on leadership, team cohesion and outdoor recreation (Md Amin, 2010; Jaffry, 2008; Mazuki, 2005).

This study will also convey new information on the outcome of UiTM and UPSI outdoor education program on participants' life effectiveness skills. The result can be used as additional information for the universities that offering subject of outdoor education to create long term planning in ensuring the quality of outdoor education program in Malaysia. The consequence of this study will provide valuable information for additional exploration towards outdoor education studies. Moreover,

