

# Banquet Course Students' of National Modular Certificate Competency in the Teaching and Learning System – An Observation on Practical Class Activity

Reezlin Abd Rahman, Muhamad Nazihan Jamaludin, and Aswady Ismail  
Sungai Petani College, Malaysia

Email: {Riezman\_kksp, aswadysmile} @ yahoo.com, muhdnazihan@yahoo.com.my

**Abstract**—This observational study empirically investigates Banqueting students of the National Modular Certificates in Sungai Petani Community College. The purpose of this study is to assess the student's competency in their practical class. The several entry level of this class had aroused some problems due to the fact that the class has been established as an advance level of cooking knowledge. The hands on approach in the practical class made it quite difficult for the students who are lag behind to achieve their knowledge and skill because of the limited or non-existence of the fundamental basics of cooking such as the basic knowledge of western and eastern cuisine. The methodology of this study involves lecturer's observation and student's examination scores. Four classes were involved as sampling within one year time-frame. This research had revealed significant gaps for us to look into on a deeper level such as in terms of the student's knowledge, intellectual, skill and their confident level. The findings of this research will benefit the curricular and the curriculum developer that they could use in improving the enrollment levels of the Module classes by classifying the classes into different levels of Basic, Intermediate, Advance, and Pre requisite class.

**Index Terms**—sijil modular kebangsaan, bloom taxonomy, teaching and learning, skill

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Background

The teaching and learning of Community College students has been based on a Modular system which was first implemented in the year of 2010. This learning concept in the form of block system allow students to conveniently enroll in National Modular classes openly in the sense that they are free to choose and enroll in the classes provided without any pre requisite. This concept is used so that students can enroll in Community Colleges based on their capabilities; this modular system can be based on their needs and tendencies. This is in accordance with the aim of the establishment of the Community Colleges itself whereby the students will not only be highly skilled, but also be involved in the process of reskilling and upskilling of the community [1].

Modular certification involves all Community Colleges throughout Malaysia including Sungai Petani Community College.

Sungai Petani Community College offers Culinary certificates for students who are keen towards the culinary arts. Skills which are implemented through hands-on activities will better enhance among Community Colleges's student. Execution of teaching and learning which are based on the modular concept is specifically for full-time students who choose to study around 2 years to complete the modular certification. However, there are also students who do not complete the modular certificates and instead chose only to take up a few module courses which in turn disqualify them for the National Modular Certificate and as such are qualified only for the specific course module certificate.

Execution of teaching and learning of the culinary option in Community College is perceived as flawed in which a few problem arises due to the various enrollment level that do not require students to partake basic culinary classes before enrolling in higher-skilled classes. This has led to dissatisfaction among educators or lecturers who feel that the students are unqualified for partaking classes of higher competency and skills as they lack in the basic and fundamental culinary skills.

### B. Problem Statement

Admission of students to classes that demands higher advance skills has sparked problems in teaching and learning process. Student's ability is the number one major issue in the process of knowledge reception as lecturers provide input during their instructional session. This indicates that the implementation of teaching has been affected. The linienity of students admission through various entry levels has been the source of lecturers' complaint against the student's readiness in learning higher/advance culinary skills. For instance, this matter gives rise to various problems such as different levels of understanding among students, poor skills and ability in getting through a particular teaching and learning session of a class. As for this, there is an utter need to study on the educator's complaints. This study mainly focuses on the students' competency through scoring and lecturers' feedback.

---

Manuscript received October 10, 2014; revised May 25, 2015.

### C. Research Objectives

Based on the previously stated problem statement, the research objectives of this study seeked to identify:

- The relationship between different means of students' enrollment and their performance level
- Stating the problems that are faced by the students who partake in this module
- Suggesting the solution to the problems that they face

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Modular System

The modular system is a solitary unit or sub-unit of the learning organization [2]-[5]. It stands on its own consistently and is encompassed within the essence of the course in which it also acts as a benchmark for teaching, learning and assessment through networking between institutions and industry towards the implementation [6]. Every unit has its own role and responsibility (block system) and is inter-related whereby it is perceived as flexible learning [2], the problem that arises in the implementation of this modular curriculum is the learning content, students' motivation and the decision of the organization. This modular system can improve the system of vocational education whereby it connects both theory and practical at the same time; students receive learning just as in school and working experience as well.

### B. Modular Programme in Malaysia (National Modular Certificate)

The implementation of modular programmes in Malaysia allows students to partake in various short modular courses according to their self-ability and interest. "Ref. [1]" The curriculum used in Community Colleges aims to train and develop hands-on working skills through short-term course modules (3 to 6 months) where it emphasizes the three aspect; technical competence, knowledge and social. As a curriculum enhancement, the modular programme is also developed through Outcome Based Education (OBE) and Competency Based Education (CBE). At the end of every module, students are awarded with the National Modular Certificate (SMK).

### C. Community College

Generally, the Ministry of Technical and Vocational Education (TAVED) under the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia has been established in the year of 1964 under the 10<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan, 2010. The establishment of this organization intends in promoting technical and vocational education across the nation. On October 1995 name of this organization was re-branded to Ministry of Technical Education (TED) [1]. The first Community College was set in the year of 2001, this intends in offering certificates and diploma to students who academically weak that they fail to score any places in universities or higher educational institution. The courses offered are keen towards technical and hands-on skills. The practical to theoretical ratio is 75:25 percent.

"Reference [1]" The innovative government approach of establishing modular programmes has opened a new dimension in teaching and learning at the Community College through the structural improvements made in the organization.

### D. Competency

"Reference [7]" Competency is an aptitude or capability. Competency refers to the combination of skills, human attitude, observation and knowledge application whereby it gives the ability to prosper a particular organization. Competency could not be separated from one's personal character and professional skills [8]. Both are inter-related and inter-dependent in the process of executing any given task. Competency is based on work performance. "Ref. [7]" there are three factors that affects the maximum success in performance which are namely; workplace organization profession demand and the individual itself. Competency evaluation is assessed through various means such as observation, head of department evaluation, aptitude and knowledge test, portfolio and self-assessment [9]. The best evaluation means based on the latest research is through self-assessment and head of department evaluation. It is said to be more consistent in having focus on competency level and detailed work.

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### A. Introduction

This research was conducted through the mixed-method study. It involved a quantitative approach which was supported by qualitative data. It is involved the collection of data taken from the examination unit which encompassed of the students' examination scores for the fourth semester module's banquet course. Interviews were also conducted on the lecturers teaching modules for the three classes involved. All of the students' information is included in the report on the study and analysis conducted on the students' ability to study is based on the methods below.

### B. Research Design

The research design by the researcher was in the form of examination scores comparisons as well as through interviews based on observations and surveys on the modular lecturers. This intended in supporting the research findings through students's scores and highlighting the problems faced while a particular lesson took place.

### C. Population and Sample

The research population involved the module's banquet course students which consist of 66 respondents 2 classes of each semester in which there are 4 classes in total that were involved in the data collection procedure. Besides that, 3 lecturers were involved in the interview that had further support the relevance of the research findings.

D. Research Instruments

Pilot test for interview questions was carried out on two respondents who are lecturers in Sungai Petani Community Colleges. As for the students's examination scores, it was obtained from the College's Examination Unit in collecting the data for the respective classes involved.

E. Data Collection Procedure

The research procedure involved these 4 levels:

1) Plan

The data collection plan had been design in which the scores were obtained from the Examination Unit and the module's banquet course lecturers' opinion were taken into account.

2) Implementation

Data collection of the students' examination scores from the Examination Unit and the collection of the student name list who partake in the banquet classes through different enrollment means as well as interviews were conducted on lecturers.

3) Data analysis

The third stage involved was analysis of data based on the data collected through examination scores analysis using SPSS and interviews.

4) Report

This stage involved the presentation of the data collected as well as the research findings.

5) Data analysis procedure

Students' examination score data was compared to the student's means of enrollment and the interview data was reported based on the theme that is developed by the researcher.

IV. RESEARCH FINDING

A. Quantitative Data Findings

The findings are based on students' examination scores as well as interviews with lecturers. The results of the demographic data frequency are as such; for age data, researchers had classified the sample into three categories namely; respondents under the age of 20 year consists of 45 people which makes up (68.2%), other respondents include those who are of 21 years to 40 years of age which makes a total of 16 (24.2%) and those who are over 41 years of age which makes is a total of 5 people (7.6%). This shows that the majority of students admitted to the Banquet course are mostly teenagers less than 20 years of age, or the ones who continues their studies immediately after receiving their SPM results. The 7.6% that make up the respondents involved indicates the course is also participated by a group of students who are older and based on the information gained; these respondents includes transition students from PERHEBAT (Military Transition Programme).

The data for Gender shows that the number for both male and female gender is almost equal with a total of 35 (53%) male and 31 (47%) female.

As for the academic session, a total of 53 (80.3%) of respondents entering cooking training through Western

Cuisines Modular Course Certificate which is the basic module course for cooking before continuing progressively up to the fourth modular course certificate which is Banqueting. However, there are 9 (13.6%) of the respondents who started their sessions for the module directly from the second semester and there are also respondents who started off with this modular from the third modular session, although the number is relatively low which is only 4 person that makes up (6.1%). Even though the number of students who does not start off the module from the very basic level is considered low; the vast difference in terms of the level of proficiency among the students might hinder teaching and learning processes.

1) Research question 1: Hypothesis test

Ho: There is no significant difference in the examination scores between the students of the three enrollment sessions

H1: There is significant difference in the examination scores between the students of the three enrollment sessions

To examine the relationship between the students' scores and their enrollment session, particularly the differences in terms of the students' level of competencies, the researcher used ANOVA in order to examine this relationship among the students of these three academic sessions. Result shows that the intake score variance of the 66 respondents who are categorized into there enrollment sessions, is homogenous or similar between the three groups (sig. 0.694). (See Table I)

TABLE I. TEST OF HOMOGENEITY OF VARIANCES

MEAN_LA			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.367	2	63	.694

Whereas ANOVA test shows that there is a significant difference in the students' examination scores between the students of the three enrollment sessions (sig. 0.005). The conclusion of this test allows the research to dismiss Ho which is states that there are no significant differences in the examination scores between the students of the three enrollment sessions. The researches' assumption that there is a difference in the students' scores between the three enrollment sessions is accepted. (See Table II)

TABLE II. ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	227.590	2	113.795	5.849	.005
Within Groups	1225.594	63	19.454		
Total	1453.184	65			

TABLE III. MULTIPLE COMPARISON

(I) Enrollment Session	(J) Enrollment Session	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.		
dimension2	1	dimension3	2	3.34879	1.59016	.097
			3	-5.64634*	2.28703	.042
	2	dimension3	1	-3.34879	1.59016	.097
			3	-8.99514*	2.65047	.003
	3	dimension3	1	5.64634*	2.28703	.042
			2	8.99514*	2.65047	.003

The research finding data was yet again tested to identify which of the group or category of students possessed the most significant difference in their test score. Post Hoc Test was used to show that all three categories of groups possessed significant statistical difference between them on the trust scale of 0.05. Scores for the third enrollment session student's shows vast difference compared to the students of second enrollment

session. This research finding data supported that student of third enrollment session lack in the basic knowledge which is the foundation needed in the higher (advance) level. This impeded their performance, causing the lecturers to give them poor scores. (See Table III)

#### 2) Interview data findings

The following (Table IV) are the demographic data of the lecturers involved in the interview:

TABLE IV. LECTURERS' DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

No	Lecturer	Age	Qualification	Institution Teaching Experience	Banquet Module Teaching Experience
1	1A	28	Diploma in Chef Training	5 years	4 years
2	2B	35	i. Diploma in Chef Training. ii. Bachelor's Degree in Science (Food Service Management) with Honours.	5 years	1 year
3	3C	34	i. Diploma in Chef Training. ii. Diploma in Education (Major in Food Technology). iii. Bachelors' Degree in Science (Food Service Management) with Honours.	8 years	3 years 6 months

Based on the table above, it can be inferred that the teaching forces for the module's banquet course are from the food studies background with the level of experience which are no less than five years. This coincides with the requirements of teaching this module banquet as they are well equipped with extensive knowledge and are highly skilled. Skills and experience among the lecturers are required in order to compliment the students learning capabilities at a higher level.

#### 3) Research question 2

What is the module's banquet course lecturer's perceptions on the students who partake in this module in Sungai Petani Community College?

Awareness of the difference in the student's entry level should be known by the lecturers. This is obtained from the first question posed to the lecturers: *Are you aware of the fact that your students comes from different entry levels?*

#### 4) All three of the lecturers are aware of the fact that their students come from different entry level.

Based on their awareness of the fact that their students come from different entry levels for the banquet course, they are required to give their opinion on their students based on their observation on the students' competency level in the class. Lecturer 1A states his opinion as such:

*"For the students who enrolled in the program SMK according to its levels, they are much more competent in understanding lecturers' command and the module content, while students who entered the SMK banquet course without going through prior sequence levels have a problem in understanding the requirements of the module."*

This opinion is later supported by the lecturer of 2B which stated that:

*"From my observation, the students' competency level highly depends on the continuity of the classes that they enroll in every semester. For those who go through the first to come basis which is from semester 1, their*

*achievement is overwhelming while for those who skip semesters their performance is impaired."*

Lecturer of 3C added that:

*"Students who enroll from semester have a higher capability in terms of their efficiency in the kitchen and their knowledge of cooking compared to other students"*

All three lecturers have a common ground on their perception towards the students in that of the students' knowledge and competency differs across the level in which they started the module from. This data supports the previously displayed quantitative data. When asked regarding their teaching approach used during teaching and learning session in order to overcome this problem, 3C lecturer stated that his method are as such:

*"Group learning is often used in which the students who started from semester 1 will lead the group."*

2B lecturer explained in detail that:

*"The learning approach that I use is by arranging the students into groups with excellent basic knowledge whereby students will be grouped with group members that are competent in order to maximise input, process and knowledge output. Individual evaluations at every stage are utterly crucial."*

Other than grouped-learning, 1A lecturer suggests that:

*"In overcoming this problem, students are provided with notes and reference materials prior to the lesson to help them understand the module progress better."*

The conclusion in terms of the measures taken to overcome the students' competency in a teaching and learning session is through grouped-learning or *peer group assessment*. Assistance is also provided by supplying the students with relevant notes and reference materials from semester 1 and semester 2 to the students who straight away begin their module from semester 3. Explanation on the basic theories of teaching is repeated to provide basic knowledge to these students as well as to reinforce the prior knowledge of the students who took the basic module. The lecturers' ability to link basic

theories and their application during practical is highly required in order to connect the students with the basic knowledge of cooking with those who are lacking the basic knowledge. The learning gap needs to be filled with explanation on the connection between basic training and practical application at a higher level so that no students are left behind due to boredom from the lecturers' repeated input.

Scoring will have impact on the students' grades. 2B lecturer states that:

*"Scoring is made based on LNP and the percentage is somewhat low and as for that the students' low marks will not be as obvious in the marks allocation".*

2B Lecturer stated that the impact of scoring is not obvious due to the fact that the scoring percentage is rather low. These scores are also supported by the students' continuous assessment scores. However, the matter mentioned above was not opposed by the lecturers of 1A and 3C:

*"Scoring process serves as a benchmark for the student's progress and development. In such situation, for the students who are not of the cooking background (those who did not partake the module progressively) they find it difficult to put themselves in the high score ranking which is above the percentage of 90%." .....* 1A Lecturer.

*"Scoring is definitely important, students who starts off from semester 1 generally achieves higher scores compared to students who started from semester 2 or 3" .....* 3C Lecturer

Here it can be seen that even though there is a gap in terms of scores among the students, the lecturer's acceptance, readiness and effort in bridging the gap is excellent. Students need to be aware of this effort as well so that the one who lag behind would catch up with the advance ones.

## V. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

### B. Figures and Tables

The finding of this research indicates that there is a profound gap in terms of the students' scores across their respective different level of enrollment. The quantitative findings had proven through correlation test which were supported by the findings of the interview data of the lecturers showed that this problem had greatly impact the students' competency and knowledge. As for that, in solving this problem, there were a few suggestions made. They are as such:

- Students need to enroll for SMK courses from a basic level.
- Students who did not enroll for SMK from a basic level should be provided with basic knowledge reference materials.
- These students need to be given extra attention so that they do not fall behind.
- Identify these students and group them with much more skilled students.
- Ensure that there are continuity classes so that these students are not neglected.

- Greater emphasis should be put on every student who enters the culinary field in terms of their individual work and skill.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Malaysia Government, *Tenth Malaysia Plan 2010-2015*, Government Press, Malaysia, 2010.
- [2] D. Raffé, "Bringing academic education and vocational training closer together," Working Paper for ESRC Research Project on the Introduction of a Unified System, Centre for Educational Sociology, University of Edinburgh, 2003.
- [3] G. Üstün, "Vocational high school female students' opinions about application level of skill education," *Journal of Faculty of Educational Science*, vol. 43, no. 1, pp. 1-16, 2010.
- [4] L. W. Edward, "Core curriculum courses: A study to determine the impact on vocational-education studies," PhD Thesis, Capella University, 2009.
- [5] R. Yasmeeen, "Human capital development role of HR during mergers and acquisitions," *The South East Asian Journal of Management*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 55-67, 2010.
- [6] A. E. Schwaller, *Instructional Strategies for Technology Education*, G. E. Martin, Ed., New York: Glencoe McGraw-Hill, 1995.
- [7] R. E. Boyatzis, "Competencies in the twenty-first century," *Journal of Management Development*, vol. 27, no. 1, pp. 5-12, 2008.
- [8] C. Levy-Leboyer, "La gestion des competences," *Les edition d'Organisation*, Paris, 1996.
- [9] M. B. Madson, "Competency benchmarks: A model for understanding and measuring competence in professional psychology across training levels," *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. S5- S26, 2009.



**Reezlin Bin Abd Rahman** was born in Alor Setar, Kedah, Malaysia on the 18th August 1975. He obtained his Diploma In Chef Training from MARA Institute of Technology (ITM) Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia in the year of 1996. Later on he took his Bachelor degree in Hotel Management, University Utara Malaysia (UUM) Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia in the year 2000. He earned his Master in Gastronomy at University Technology Mara (UiTM) in the year of 2011.

Working as a certified Chef for 5 years, he later on practiced teaching in Culinary Art subject. He's now a Senior lecturer under Malaysian Ministry Of Higher Education, now 12 year working under Sungai Petani Community College, Malaysia. He has authored and co-authored several papers in scientific journals and international conference. Mr. Reezlin is a former member in Penang Chef Association (CAP), Northern Malay Chef Association Malaysia (MACOM) and Malaysia Chef Association (CAM). He has been consistently recognized for teaching excellence. Currently he's pursued and continues his education journey to the highest recognition on Phd that major to the Halal Food.



**Muhammad Nazihan Bin Jamaludin** was born in Kedah, Malaysia on the 25th October 1979. Graduated in Diploma In Chef Training, University Technology Mara (Uitm) Shah Alam, Selangor Malaysia (2001), Bachelor of Science Food Service Management University Technology Mara (Uitm) Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia in the year of 2004. Later on he finishes his Diploma Of Education in Food Technology Management in the year 2008. As a certified for 3 years he changed his career to teaching. He's now a senior full-time experience lecturer under Malaysian Ministry Of Higher Education, working under Sungai Petani Community College, Malaysia for 8 years. Mr. Muhammad Nazihan is a member in Penang Chef Association (CAP), Northern Malay Chef Association Malaysia (MACOM) and Malaysia Chef Association (CAM). His availability to the hotel industry prior to culinary art is great catch.



**Aswady Bin Ismail** was born in Mr. Muhammad Nazihan is a member in Penang Chef Assosiation (CAP), Northen Malay Chef Association Malaysia (MACOM) and Malaysia Chef Association (CAM). His availability to the hotel industry prior to culinary art is great catch. Pulau Pinang, Malaysia on the 21st March 1978. He graduated in Diploma in Chef Training, University Technology Mara (Uitm)

Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia in the year of 2000. Later on he took his Bachelor degree in Culinary Art, MARA University of Technology (UiTM) Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia in the year 2010.

He was a certified Chef for 8 years and later on practicing teaching in Culinary Art subject as a part-time lecturer. He's now a full-time lecturer in Sungai Petani Community College. His latest publish article is: Effectiveness of Teaching and Learning Through Intensive Practical Training- Case study in Sungai Petani College Community (Johor, Malaysia:PMJB, Mac 2014). His drive is to know more on teaching and learning in culinary subject.

Mr. Aswady is a member in Penang Chef Assosiation (CAP), Northen Malay Chef Association Malaysia (MACOM) and Malaysia Chef Association (CAM). His expertise in culinary art made him valuable to college commitees.