

SPECIAL CHEF CORNER PROGRAMME: A JOB SKILLS TRAINING PRACTICE AS A PREPARATION FOR CAREER TRANSITION PROGRAMME

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to discuss the implementation of Job Skills Training (JST) activities for Special Needs Students (SNS) in Special Education Integration Programme (SEIP), Bandar Sungai Buaya Secondary School. Information and research data were obtained through mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) with 2 existing SEIP teachers, school administrators and also the school canteen operators to identify issues and problems that cause JST activities to stop. The findings show that the purpose of the implementation of this JST needs to be explained to the relevant parties. Implementation methods and procedures also need to be improved. The Kaizen approach is used. Following that, SNS SEIP Bandar Sungai Buaya Secondary School has implemented a Special Chef Corner Programme which involved 3 teachers, 13 SNSs during break time and 4 SNSs in the afternoon. The implementation of Special Chef Corner Programme has been carried well in 2018 and 2019. SEIP students are also more confident, cheerful and able to socialize well. This programme has indirectly provided services to Form 3 and Form 5 students who need to attend extra classes in the afternoon. The idea of this Special Chef Corner Programme successfully improved the implementation of JST activities and was further effective in resolving the challenges of SNS's preparation for the Career Transition Programme.

Keywords: Students with Special Needs, Job Skills Training, Career Transition Programme, Advocacy, Kaizen Approach, Observe-Plan-Do-Check-Adjust (OPDCA) Cycle

1. Introduction

SEIP was first introduced in Malaysia in 1962 among others to achieve the goal of developing the talents and potential of students through vocational education to produce semi-skilled groups and in turn become an asset to the country.

This is in line with the Philosophy of Special Education which is, "Special Education in Malaysia is a continuous effort to produce people who are skilled, oriented, capable, faithful, independent, able to plan and manage life and realize their potential as an individual and a balanced and productive member of society in line with the National Education Philosophy."

While the Special Education Mission is, "Provide quality education to students with special needs to make them independent, successful in life and contribute to society and the country."

Since the academic mastery of SNS SEIP is minimal, then they need more skills training that can guarantee the future at least to be independent after school. To achieve this goal, a special education curriculum has also been established. The definition of Curriculum according to the Education (National Curriculum) Regulations 1997 Under the Education Act 1996 (ACT 550) is "An educational programme that includes curriculum and co-curricular activities that cover all knowledge, skills, norms, values, cultural elements and beliefs to assist a student's development in terms of physical, spiritual, mental, and knowledge imparting".

Beginning in 2017 the Special Education Secondary School Standard Curriculum has been implemented. Based on the Curriculum and Assessment Standards Document (CASD) of the Special Education Secondary School Standard Curriculum on page 6, it is stated that JST should be disclosed to SNSs, especially SNSs with learning difficulties. JST is a set of coordinated activities for SNSs with learning disabilities that are outcome or impact oriented to enable them to transition from school to after school including vocational training, employment, community service and independent living training. The main goal of JST is to provide opportunities for SNS to improve and master self-skills, communication, socialization and basic skills related to work in life. JST can be divided into three forms, namely:

- a) Internal training in the form of well-planned project work.
- b) Job training involving external parties or external work.
- c) Actual job training.

Based on the CASD on page 9, the Career Transition Programme (CTP) is an element of SNS's readiness to be in the world of work. SNS needs to have employability skills, namely various basic skills and soft skills. The application of such skills should take place throughout the teaching and learning process. The CTP is a skills development and support development programme for SNS implemented from form one to form five. The programme provides psychological, emotional and mental support to help SNSs adapt to the environment, individuals and communities in schools, families, training places and workplaces. This programme also aims to provide and support the transition process of SNS towards the world of work and adulthood, including aspects of family, social community and recreation based on the ability, strength, interest and potential of SNS after school.¹ The CTP needs to be supported by JST activities that are practiced in schools. Therefore, JST is a preparation for the CTP.

While CASD on page 20 discusses the application of the Entrepreneurial Element. It aims to form the characteristics and practices of entrepreneurship to become a culture among SNS and able to cultivate attitudes such as diligence, honesty, trust and responsibility as well as develop creative and innovative minds. Based on all the factors mentioned above, an action research needs to be made so that JST activities in SEIP Bandar Sungai Buaya Secondary School can be implemented again.

2. Problem Statement and Objectives

The Special Education Integration Programme (SEIP) at Bandar Sungai Buaya Secondary School was established in 2010 starting with 2 teachers and a Student Management Assistant

¹ Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (2019)

to handle a total of 6 students with various disabilities. However, the number of SNS has increased from year to year.

Job Skill Training (JST) activities have been implemented every year since it was established. The idea of this Special Chef Corner Programme has been sparked and is planned to start in 2018 to meet that need. It is an effort to improve the practice of JST, the implementation of practical activities for the subject of Self-Management and Basic Culinary Skills as well as PPKI Entrepreneurship Club activities that have been carried out over the years. It is also related to the Career Transition Programme (CTP) which was first implemented in 2020 as well as the continuation of the implementation of 1 PPKI 1 Product Programme organized by the Hulu Selangor District Education Office which was launched on 15 August 2016.

SNS in Bandar Sungai Buaya sells Malaysian ice cream and repackaged snacks on a small scale. Each SNS takes on their respective roles according to their level of ability. However, in 2017, the school management brought up issue that put this programme to an halt. The challenge arose on how advocacy for SNS can be done. This issue is very important to be overcome to ensure the development and progress of SNS of SEIP at Bandar Sungai Buaya Secondary School. It is also important for MBK if teaching and learning activities can be implemented in practice so that they understand better and subsequently achieve a competent skill level.

This study was conducted to achieve the following objectives:

- a) Review the implementation of JST and 1 SEIP 1 Product Programme.
- b) Complete sales activities as in the syllabus of Self-Management and Basic Cooking.
- c) Continuing the activities of the Entrepreneurship Club.
- d) Explore more efficient and systematic implementation methods.
- e) Build a friendly and harmonious relationship with the whole school and community.
- f) Build the skills of SNS SEIP, namely:
 - i. Improve communication skills and self-advocacy skills.
 - ii. Increase self-confidence.
 - iii. Able to interact and socialize with mainstream students well.
 - iv. Be a mentor to other SNSs.
 - v. Ready to join the CTP.

The main challenge for special education teachers is to make plans in learning to meet the curriculum that is appropriate to the level and cognitive abilities of each SNS. At the same time special education teachers need to fight to help and guide SNS for their self-advocacy. Therefore, the special education teacher profession requires individuals with strong self-efficacy and resilience. Programmes in the form of advocacy and administrative skills for special students need to be intensified throughout the school. This is to coordinate the understanding of administrators and management in handling matters related to students with special needs. Thus, it streamlines the management process and facilitates special education teachers to improve the teaching and learning of students without any unnecessary administrative barriers. (HA Amran et.al. 2019)

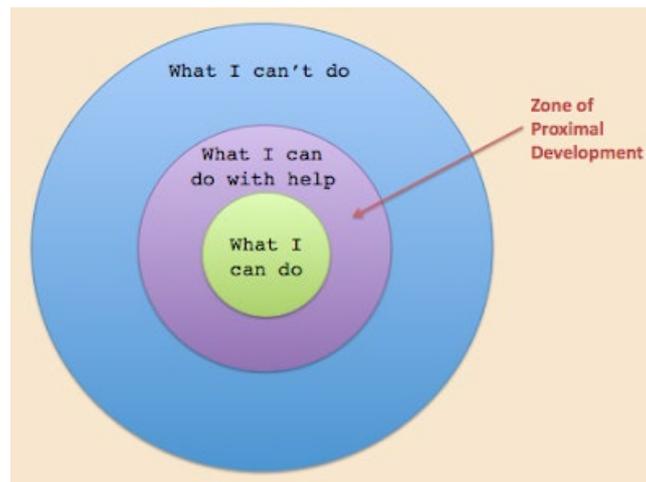
3. Literature Review

A number of theories are found by the researcher to compliment the smooth management of JST SEIP Bandar Sungai Buaya Secondary School and also other activities in education management.

3.1 Zone of Proximal Development

It is a concept developed by the Russian constructivist psychologist and sociologist Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934). Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is defined by Vygotsky (1978) as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky 1978, p. 86).

Figure 1: ZPD Model



Source: Azman bin Safii, 2018

Based on the ZPD model shown above, ZPD is marked on the second purple circle which is a situation where teachers still need guidance and assistance in solving problems or performing tasks assigned to them. The blue outer circle is the zone where either a teacher is in that zone that needs total guidance and help from teachers, peers or MKO (More Knowledgeable Others). The green circle in the middle is the potential of the teacher that has been developed, that is, the teacher can independently perform tasks or problem solving on their own without the need for assistance.

The zone of proximal development is the gap between what a learner mastered (actual level of development) and what he or she can achieve when provided with educational support (potential development). It is a process in which a teacher or peer provides assistance to their peers who are in the ZPD as needed. Assistance continues to be provided to a point where the teacher is able to complete his or her own tasks or problems and no longer needs guidance. In the context of leadership, competent administrators are able to identify the ZPDs of teachers under their supervision so that planned interventions and improvements can be focused on teacher development more effectively in line with the role of administrators as leaders, mentors and motivators.

3.2 Kaizen Approach

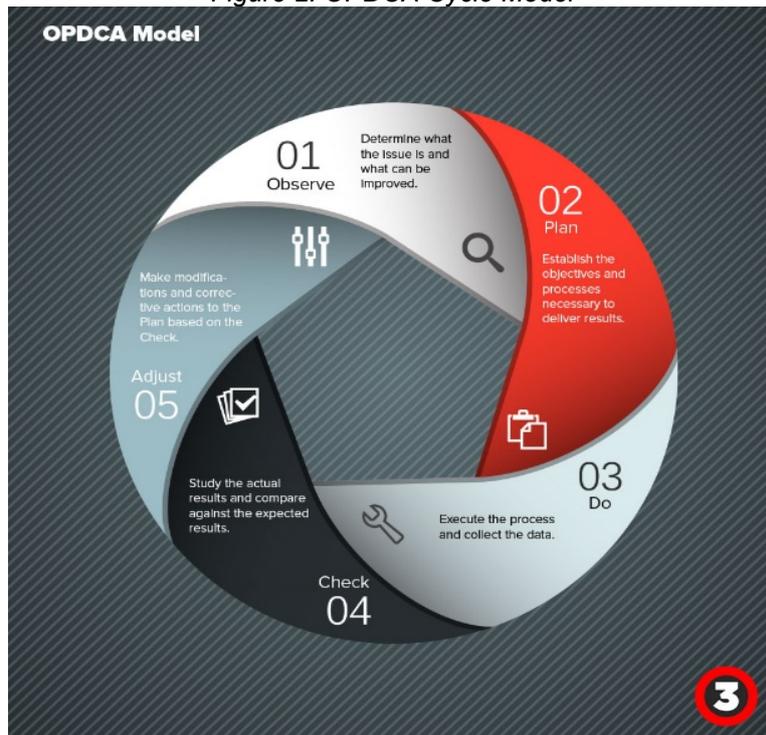
The concept of Kaizen was founded in Japan which means “continuous improvement” that focuses on processes as well as outcomes (Slobodan Prošić, 2011). Kaizen refers to every action, operation, or rule used to make a change. The focus is to maximize efficiency by influencing all parties, from ordinary employees to high-ranking individuals in the organization.

Kaizen consists of two parts, with action being the main part while the second part is philosophy or way of thinking.

There are 2 models in the Kaizen approach, namely the OPDCA Cycle Model and the "The 5 Why System" Model. (Brian Onorio, 2015)

3.2.1 Observe-Plan-Do-Check-Adjust (OPDCA) Cycle Model

Figure 2: OPDCA Cycle Model

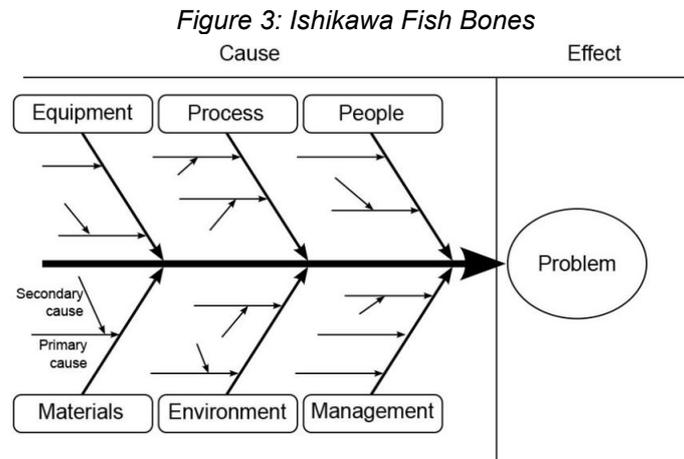


Source: Brian Onorio, 2015

The OPDCA cycle is a systematic cycle to achieve improvement of a product or process

- ✓ Observe. Determine what the problem is and what can be fixed.
- ✓ Plan. Set the objectives and processes needed to deliver results.
- ✓ Do. Implement the process, and collect data.
- ✓ Check. Check it out. Study the actual results and compare with the expected results.
- ✓ Adjust. Perform modifications or corrective activities on the planning plan based on the inspection.

3.2.2 “The 5 Why System” Model



Source: Brian Onorio, 2015

The 5 Whys is a repetitive search technique used to examine the cause-and-effect relationship underlying a particular problem. The main goal of this technique is to determine the main problem of the defect or problem. This is a form of primary cause analysis in which the user asks a 'series of why questions' about a failure that has occurred while basing each subsequent question on an answer to the previous one. There are usually a series of symptoms that stem from a single cause and all of them can be seen using the Ishikawa Fishbone diagram.

3.3 Strategic Planning and Strategic Communication

The challenges of an uncertain and ever-changing environment demand that organizations devise a careful and reasonable planning process. This requires efforts to find and evaluate various alternatives through the formulation of the best strategy to realize the vision, mission and objectives set. Strategic planning is a key aspect in setting the direction of the organization so that all strategies and services provided are always up to date, relevant and meet current aspirations. (Samsuri, 2005)

Strategic communication is communication that is planned and used to achieve organizational goals. Communication should be seen as constitutive, based on careful planning, careful implementation and continuous evaluation. Its most discussed role is to find solutions in organizational communication issues, followed by improving employee morale and reducing emotional conflict, managing public sector reputation effectively and driving the process of organizational change, communication effectiveness and its impact on the organization, communication direction, communication channels, content communication and communication style. Other aspects seen are the role of leadership, interpersonal relationships, planning, implementation and evaluation of communication. (Maizatul Haizan et.al. 2019)

4. Research Methodology

This study was conducted to discuss the activities of JST by SNS SEIP Bandar Sungai Buaya Secondary School. The idea is to continue and improve the implementation of JST activities and further identify its effectiveness in resolving the challenges of implementing the CTP.

This study involved 3 SEIP teachers in Bandar Sungai Buaya Secondary School to continue the guidance of JST towards SNS with the support of all school members. It is also involved 6 moderately functional SNS who will act as mentors to share experience with other SNS. This study uses a mixed method by conducting structured interview and Need Analysis on the Special Chef Corner Programme among SEIP teachers, school administrators and canteen operators. The researcher has also analysed JST programme files and documents such as working papers and financial notes. Apart from that information on sales products is also obtained.

This study examined these research questions:

1. What are the challenges faced by the Special Need Students (SNS) of Bandar Sungai Buaya secondary school in continuing Job Skill Training (JST)?
2. Given the prescribed programme outline on Job Skill Training (JST), does it show effectiveness in solving the challenges faced?

A need analysis was done before the programme was carried out to find out the challenges faced by the SNS. A survey question was distributed to the SEIP teachers. Based on the data collected, the intervention was done. As a follow-up to check the effectiveness of the programme, another survey question was distributed to the respondents.

4.1 Data Analysis

The following are the results of a questionnaire related to the implementation of Job Skills Training (JST) at Bandar Sungai Buaya Secondary School in 2017. It was given to 2 respondents.

No.	Questionnaire	Yes	No	Not relevant
1.	JST could not be continued because it did not have full support from the administrator.	1	1	
2.	JST could not be continued because it did not have full support of school people.		2	
3.	JST could not be continued due to opposition from the school canteen.	2		
4.	JST could not be continued because SEIP teachers were unable to implement.		2	
5.	JST cannot be continued because the student is incompetent.		2	
6.	JST could not be continued due to financial factors.		2	
7.	JST is well implemented.	2		
8.	The implementation of JST went smoothly.	2		
9.	JST needs to be continued.	2		
10.	Snack sales are well accepted.	1	1	
11.	Ice cream products are well accepted.	2		
12.	Buttermilk products are well accepted.	1	1	
13.	The price of the product is reasonable.	2		
14.	Break time is the most suitable time for JST activities.	2		
15.	JST activities are well recorded.	1	1	

The following are the findings of the study:

- a) There was a lack of understanding of the relevant parties and school people in general about the importance of this JST programme.

- b) Recording of JST activities is less systematic.
- c) Teachers are demotivated to continue JST because of the obstacles and challenges.
- d) JST activities and Entrepreneurship Club sales activities stopped immediately.
- e) Product revenue for Programme 1 SEIP 1 Product also stopped.
- f) The SNS training process did not run smoothly and caused the goal to achieve the objectives of JST to be hindered.
- g) Improvement in terms of product production and activity documentation is necessary.

Based on the findings of the study, there is a need to re-implement JST activities and maintain them as an important and ongoing practice for SNS. Therefore, proactive measures need to be taken. It must also be guided by policy stipulations in education and implemented in a planned manner. It also involves a careful and reasonable planning process. The implementation strategy of the programme should be seen in terms of appropriate time, appropriate product and appropriate quantity. The researcher has designed the implementation of JST using the Kaizen approach by making observations and improvements over time. A Module of Special Chef Corner Programme was outlined and has been carried out.

Among the actions that have been implemented is to prepare a complete working paper as a way to explain the purpose and method of implementation clearly such as schedule and distribution of tasks along with details of activities. Special education teachers are invited together in meetings held including meetings with school canteen operators. A letter of notification to the canteen operator containing the importance of the activity and detailed information on the implementation schedule of the activity was delivered and received well. Advertisements and promotions are distributed to the entire school population with clear product lists and quotes. Special Chef Corner Programme as a module of Job Skills Training (JST) combined 1 SEIP 1 Product Programme. The management file was created. The same goes for financial files. It is provided so that records are easily referenced and monitored.

Records of entries should be written in detail. Records of material purchases, income and expenses are also recorded. Activity reports are also prepared and presented in the SEIP management meeting every year.

JST's activities have continued smoothly. There has been an improvement from only selling Malaysian Ice Cream products to toast, fruit and milk flavoured jelly and donuts. The SEIP students involved are more cheerful and more confident. The response from the residents of Bandar Sungai Buaya Secondary Schools was also very encouraging. It has also improved the implementation of practical activities in the subject of Self-Management and Basic Culinary Skills which are implemented in a modular manner with the activities of the Entrepreneurship Club. This programme has indirectly provided services to Form 3 and Form 5 students who need to attend extra classes in the afternoon.

The following are the results of a questionnaire after the programme.

No.	Questionnaire	Yes	No	Not relevant
1.	Job Skills Training through the Special Chef Corner Program went smoothly.	2		
2.	The Special Chef Corner programme receives support from administrators.	2		
3.	The Special Chef Corner programme was well accepted by the school canteen operator.	2		
4.	The entire school community support the Special Chef Corner Programme	2		

5.	The special need students like to get involved in the Special Chef Corner Programme	2		
6.	Special Chef Corner Programme helps improve the skills of special needs students	2		

Suggestion from the SEIP teachers:

1. Train students according to certain skills until they are really proficient or master the skill.
2. Increased sales time.
3. Additions and various menus.
4. Addition and disclosure of sales and marketing / promotion knowledge among students.

5. Conclusion

The idea of this Special Chef Corner programme successfully improved the implementation of Job Skills Training (JST) activities and was further effective in resolving the challenges of SNS's preparation for the Career Transition Programme (CTP). This activity will be continued with improvement from time to time with the hope that all parties will continue to work together, support and work with special education teachers either directly or indirectly towards upholding the high-quality national education system in producing SNS that are skilled and noble in character.

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