

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter summarizes the various results and findings the researcher has made in her study. The conclusion follows the sequence of the research questions based on the previous chapter. At the end of the chapter, further suggestions are recommended for further studies regarding the Government-Aided textbook Scheme in future.

The research questions are as below:

1. What is the extent of effective usage of government-aided textbooks by students in learning?
2. What is the extent of effective usage of government-aided textbooks by teachers in instruction?
3. How is the management of the GATS at the school level?
4. What is the cost-benefit of the textbook loan scheme for the entire school in an affluent area?

There are high percentages in the usage of textbooks in the learning process. Of the total, 95.9% (308) students frequently used the textbooks as the main text, 94.7% (304) of them as a study subject, 90.4% (290 students) as the main reference, 86.9% (279 students) as exercise work and 81.9% (263 students) for revision. This finding shows that textbook is an important tool in the learning process of students in classroom as well as at home. This finding share the same views as Zulkifli, Sharil and Shahrir, Vespoor and Wu, Isahak, Shieffelbein and Farrel, Harms and Yager. It may suggest that the list of titles of textbooks as required by the Ministry of Education for the students in the whole country is compulsory and thus the common usage prevailed.

The curriculum set up by the Ministry required the students and teachers to use the recommended textbooks in learning. Hence, the frequent usage and dependency of the textbook is popular and serve the purposes of learning as mentioned above.

Comparatively, textbooks also enabled the learning of other skills. High percentages of frequent usage of textbooks in enhancing reading skills 93.1% (299 students), mathematical skills 91.9% (295 students), lesson revision 89.4% (287 students) and writing skills 81.6% (262 students) are evident in this study. This indicates that the frequent usage of textbooks enhances learning. Thus, textbooks contribute to one's learning in many ways to acquire and enhance the various learning skills.

Textbook usage is always related to academic achievement of students. This study shows that students frequently depend on the usage of textbooks in their quest for excellence and achievement. History 89.4% (287 students), Mathematics 88.1% (283 students) are two subjects which indicate frequent usage in relation to academic achievement as compared to other subjects such as English Language 81.9% (263 students), Malay Language 80.1% (257 students), Science 77.3% (248 students) and Health and Physical Education 76% (244 students) .

In respect to the above findings, GATS textbooks contributions to the academic achievement of the students varies for different subjects. This implied that the content of different subjects are different and that the usage of the textbooks varies according to the subjects studied. For example, the frequent usage of History books may well explained that most of the content of the books are factual and the subject required students to read and remember the facts. Nonetheless, Mathematics books with a high percentage of frequent usage also contributed in the students academic achievement. This is because the content of the books consists of mostly mathematical sums for exercises. Hence, teachers and students frequently need to use the books for explanation as well as practical exercises of calculation.

As compared with the language subjects like English and Malay Language, learning does not solely depend on the books. Other forms of learning languages such as from newspaper, magazines, fiction and non-

fiction books are also used. Science is also a subject where learning is not merely based on the textbooks but also experiments and observations carried out in the class. Therefore, the dependency is not optimal relative to History and Mathematics.

The teachers are required to use the textbooks in instruction as the content is structured based on the curriculum or syllabus set by the Ministry of Education which incorporates the country's educational philosophy and values. The frequent usage of textbooks by the teachers for exercise work is 85.2% (52 teachers), as the main text is 83.6% (51 teachers), and lesson preparation 80.4% (49 teachers).

A lower percentage of usage as main reference 77% (47) by the teachers suggests that teachers use the textbooks as required by the authority but exercise their flexibility in their reference which might be due to the unsuitability and incorrect or irrelevant content in some of the topics of the subjects as indicated by findings of Nageswerarav (1989), Halijah Harun (1991), Kartini (1991) and Cheok Teng Se (1994).

Teachers' usage of the textbooks for revision is comparatively low at 55.7% (34 teachers). This shows that the teachers preference usage of other materials such as revision books with a percentage of 91.8% (56 teachers) presides over the textbooks

It is either the lack of quality of the textbooks such as the content, language, illustration and presentation or the preference of variety in order to

enable students to be interested and opened to other forms of knowledge and experience explain the low percentage usage of textbook for revision by the teachers.

The usage of textbooks by the students as compared to the teachers is higher as can be seen in the table below :

Table 25

Comparison of types of usage for textbooks by the students and teachers

Usage	Students	Teachers
As main text	95.9% (308)	83.6% (51)
As main reference	90.4% (290)	77.0% (47)
For revision	81.9% (263)	55.7% (34)
For exercise	86.9% (279)	85.2% (52)
For learning/teaching	94.7% (304)	82.0% (50)

On the basis of this table, the usage of textbooks among the students in this study is relatively optimal. The reliance of textbook in learning, is high but varies in the various aspect such as enhancing reading and mathematical skills, types of learning and also academic achievement by subject.

As for the usage of textbooks by the teachers, the finding reveals regular usage but not total reliance. The difference of usage of textbooks between the teachers and the students is that the teachers possess the abilities and flexibility to assess and determine the usage of the textbooks. Certain topics which are found to be unsuitable or shallow in their content are complimented or supplemented by the usage of other materials in their instructions. Nevertheless, frequent usage of revision books by the teachers implied that the quality of revision books is better than that of the textbooks supplied to the school. The frequent usage of revision books by the teachers is a leading factor which leads to the high usage of revision books by the students 94.7% (304).

Teachers dependence on revision books for acquiring extra facts and details, revision, setting questions for tests and examinations for school as well as using them to guide the students in the examining format of major public examinations such as the Penilaian Rendah Menengah (PMR) and Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) are some of the reasons for the popular usage and reliance of the revision books. This finding reveals that the textbooks need to be reviewed from time to time in order to check, select and update the relevance of facts and factual and discoveries without distorting and eliminating the required curriculum formatted previously by the Ministry of Education. In this way' it would help to generate greater interest towards the usage of the textbooks as the quality improves.

In view of the high percentage of usage of revision books by the students and the teachers, the methods of book selection and its effectiveness of the scheme is another aspect which is of great importance. The Textbook Bureau needs to have a critical and careful selection committee to choose and to draw up the content for different subjects, in accordance with the national education policy of spirit and values of democracy, liberal tolerance and national identity to excel in achieving the country's Vision 2020.

The quality of books which includes the content, presentation, language and exercises will affect the desire interest and reference which served as the main motivation to study. The logical sense is that quality textbooks will produce quality students. Besides that, the selection of publishers is another difficult task of making sure that these organizations will help to formulate the production of quality books which at all cost, the total quality control should be adhered.

It is hoped that the findings may help to elevate importance to the ever changing of ad-hoc political policy on education where very often new policies sprang up due to political desires without considering the actual situation, the impact and the implication, the implementation, the disturbances, the anxiety arose from different quarters of education, the cost and time, the effectiveness of the policies and spontaneous changes been made without proper studies, consultations and considerations. The

changing of educational policies will undoubtedly make changes in the curriculum which will require changes in the list of textbooks provided by GATS .

The frequent changes will result in wastage too because the cost benefit of usage of loaned textbooks will not achieve maximum usage. This is because of disposal of textbooks which do not adhered to current syllabus due to the changes made.

Besides that, the findings of significance of relationship between the level of academic achievement by the usage of textbooks as the main reference, for revision of lessons, for exercises and for learning a certain subject are insignificant. The level of academic achievement is not affected by these variables. Students who seldom and always use the textbooks achieve good level of academic excellence. This may be due to the reason that the students do not only use the textbooks in their studies but also other materials like the revision books, workbooks and model answers. Hence, there are no significant relationship between the level of academic achievement with the variables.

But, there is a significance in the relationship between the level of academic achievement by the parents' income. 81.7% (138 students) obtained good in their results with the fathers' income in the range of RM401.00 - RM 800.00 in contrast with 85.3% (232 students) attained good in their studies with the mothers' income in the "No Response" category. This

shows that irrespective of whatever the amount of income the parents earn, it has influence on their children in their studies in school.

The finding regarding the management of the GATS at the school level in this study shows that the procedure and process of the total management of GATS at the school level do not encounter serious difficulties. The school with an all-girl population does not encounter difficulties in the process of application, allocation and distribution of the textbooks. The storeroom is well-kept, no report of theft of any sort, conditions of the textbooks are good, there is always replacement for lost books. Lost or damaged books are not allowed to replace in money form but with the respective title of book lost or damaged. The stocks are updated and kept by the teachers in-charge with the cooperation from the class teachers. Besides that, students and their parents abide to the terms and conditions set by GATS, such as care in the usage of the textbooks.

But, under utilization is a prevailing problem in this school. There are many books which are left in the storeroom each year with the number of applicants dwindling in the lower Forms of One and Two. Even though with the implementation of the closed system of control at district level, many times that the teacher in-charge attended meetings and brought out this issue, no immediate measure has been taken by the officer-in-charge at the district level. The efficiency of management of GATS at school level is highly effective in terms of storage, allocation and distribution but at the

district level the management is ineffective. There is no follow-up actions upon decisions make in the meetings regarding the redistribution of the textbooks from the excess of some schools to that of the shortage in other schools. Teachers-in-charge in various schools are left to solve the problem among themselves. The personnel in charge of GATS at district level do not visit schools to assist the teachers in-charge in the management of the scheme and the problems. The tremendous amount of work in school, the non-existent of facilities such as the request of working area and the annual schedule of the school which coincides with the busiest time of the year: the beginning and end of the year which the procedure of distribution and collection take place needs consideration.

Finally, the cost-benefit of the textbook loan scheme in this study proves to achieve returns of more than 500 percent even though the school is situated in an affluent area. This finding shows that the locality of the school does not matter in achieving returns from the scheme. Hence, the textbook loan scheme is beneficial to the poor students even in affluent areas.

Suggestions for Further Studies

This study is restricted to the findings of management of GATS in an all-girl school in an affluent area. It will be useful if the study is extended to primary schools: the National type, the vernacular type: Chinese and Tamil schools and secondary schools : co-education and single-sex schools in the rural, urban and suburban areas of the country. The findings will streamline and formulate stringent guidelines to the effectiveness of GATS at school, district and national level. It will enable the Textbook Division of the Ministry of Education to reassess the production of textbooks as required by the national curriculum , the teachers and the students.

Besides that, detailed study on the extend of other factors which influenced the usage of the textbooks by the students and the teachers in learning and teaching as indicated by this study as well as previous studies will enable a change of positive attitudes, especially the teachers towards the usage of the textbooks.

Conclusion

This case study was carried out in an all-girl school in an affluent suburb. There are many implications from this study. First, the GATS which had successfully provided textbooks aid to the rural poor should also extend the assistance to the urban poor too. The implementation of the scheme has seen the government's effort in eradicating poverty for the rural poor to enable them to enjoy a better standard of living. As the population of urban areas increases, this kind of aid is also essential and should extensively make available to the urban poor because it can prove to yield successful returns in term of social, economic and political benefits as achieved by the rural poor.

Nonetheless, the quality of textbooks supplied by GATS should be improved and constantly upgraded in order to provide quality materials for learning. For example, the Form Four History textbook which needs better content materials, illustrations and presentations. The Textbook Division of the Ministry of Education should work towards a holistic concept of combining the expertise of the academicians, teachers, writers, editors and the publishers to produce quality textbooks. Very often, the publishers with the intention of maximizing profits, are afraid to incur extra cost if the manuscripts are found to be unsuitable if they are put to pretest. Their aim of commercialization resulted in the lower quality of textbooks. Steps should

be taken to rectify and control the whole mechanism of preparation until the final stage of production of the textbooks in order to minimize the selfish aim of the publishers. Besides the open system of tender which is usually awarded to big publishers, other alternative should be considered.

The publishers are concerned with their profits but the values of total commitment, honesty and social service to the nation should not be ignore by them who must act as responsible corporate citizens to the country. Some form of measures should be design in this respect to check on the publishers.

The Education Planning and Research Department of the Ministry of Education should be independent and not easily influenced by political policies. The practice of creating a curriculum instantly with each announcement of some political figures is often not thoroughly studied and planned that resulted in the formulation of the whole subject of being sub-standard in terms of content, illustration, language, exercises and so on. A good example is the subject of Alam Manusia for the primary school which is now defunct.

The addition and changing of different subjects in school in a relative short time should be minimized because wastage will occur and maximum cost-benefit of GATS will not be achieved. The Ministry of Education should prepare their long-term plans; study and plan a curriculum for a particular subject with in-depth studies, feasibility and pretest before introduce to all

the schools in the country. In this way, proper planning of production of quality textbooks can be done.

The current economic crisis that the country is facing prompted the review in many aspects of the management of the Textbook Division and GATS at state, district and school level. Cost reduction and improvement of productivity are the major aspects that need to be review and reassess to assist the overcoming of the country's economic crisis.

Local materials for the production of textbooks must be source by the publishers and academicians, teachers, writers and editors need to be more creative and innovative to achieve improved productivity. The Ministry's officers must work hand in hand with all parties involved in the production of quality textbooks to counter the existing problems and updating the latest changes.

Other alternative, such as the privatization of the textbook loan scheme to responsible bodies or private sector will improve on management of the GATS of the country. As the population of students increases, the Ministry of Education needs to review the management of the textbook loan scheme because efficiency means better control of wastage of GATS.

My hope is that, all people in the education community should strife for quality education through the production of quality textbooks to enable the students to attain excellent academic achievement. This in-turn will create an educated nation in achieving the country's Vision 2020.