

INTEGRATING VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN CULINARY ARTS AND ISLAMIC STUDIES AT JUVENILE REHABILITATION CENTRES: MALAYSIAN EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

The Juvenile Rehabilitation Centres (JRC) in Malaysia aims to provide shelter, counselling and skills training to juveniles specifically for those who wish to transform themselves from the regrettable misdeeds they have committed. At JRCs, an integrated Culinary Vocational Training and Islamic education forms part of their training curriculum. The skills acquired should enable trainees to secure jobs upon completion of training. However, there are some training institutions that lack systematic training structures resulting in trainees becoming less skilful in both vocational and Islamic education. The objective of this research is to identify the effectiveness of an integrated Culinary and Islamic Education curriculum implemented at JRCs in Malaysia. This is a descriptive survey and data was obtained using questionnaire and interview. Respondents comprised 92 trainees, four managers, four culinary trainers and four Islamic education teachers, all from four different JRCs. The findings show that the trainees are happy with their trainings that brought about positive effects for them. Some suggestions have been made to provide improvements in the implementation of the course among them the inclusion of prayers in the Islamic education syllabus.

Keywords: *Integrated vocational training, culinary arts, Islamic education, spiritual-emotional support*

1. INTRODUCTION

The government, private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are obligated and committed to caring and guiding misbehaved teens to acquire knowledge and skills. In many countries all over the world, JRCs are mushrooming. In countries like Australia, for instance, there is a JRC known as Bethany Shelter Home for unmarried pregnant teenagers (Taylor, 1974). Bethany Protection House not only provides protection to pregnant juveniles but also provide protection to children born to these teenagers. Similarly, the Indian Child Welfare Act (CWA 1978), which is under the Indian federal government, has the responsibility to take charge of safeguarding the interests of children, juveniles and women as well as managing the placement of the child and the youth. In Diamond Ranch Academy Hurricane Utah, New Zealand, there is also a boarding school for juvenile rehabilitation that offers a variety of rehabilitation programs (2014). The Department of Community Development, Ministry of Culture Youth and Sports in Brunei has also been responsible for protecting teens by placing them at the Welfare Housing Complex since 1982.

The Malaysian government is also very concerned about protecting and educating misbehaving juveniles and the Department of Social Welfare has the responsibility to undertake this. Juveniles are placed at Sekolah Tunas Bakti, Asrama Bahagia Kampung Pandan and Taman Seri Puteri under the provisions of the Children Act 2001. Close cooperation in protecting teenagers is also being intensely worked out by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as at Raudhatus Sakinah. Munad (2012) reported that the centre can help these juveniles improve their self-confidence and ability to become useful persons to society, religion and the state. In rehabilitation centres, the teenage trainees receive vocational training like tailoring, catering, crafting, culinary and flower compositions. In addition, the trainees also learn Islamic education to help themselves develop their spiritual needs. All religious practice which is based on Al-Quran and Al-Sunnah surrounding the teachings of Islam are integrated into the vocational training to better rehabilitate them. A study by Miller (2009) using Holistic Education Model, includes three types of integration. Firstly, the integration of Concept of Separate-Splitting, whereby there is little correlation between each other. Secondly, the Concept of Integration between the two or three things regardless of the problem or the theme, and, thirdly integration of the entire aspects in one theme.

A range of knowledge and skills is given to trainees at the JRCs with the hope that the acquired vocational skills in culinary and Islamic education will leave a positive impression on them. Through a well-crafted and comprehensive model the training will leave good impression and increase the knowledge and skills of the trainees. According to Purba (2011), a good model can create an atmosphere of cross-examination between trainees and trainers whereby they can gain information and learn how to analyse problems. According to the Four-Level Evaluation Model by Kirkpatrick (1987), assessment of effective training has four phases. The first phase is at the end of the exercises carried out to identify the satisfaction level of the participants regarding the curriculum developed, the method that have been applied and the tasks given to the participants. In the second stage, knowledge and skills acquisition and integrated attitudes and assimilation occur. In the third stage, an evaluation process is applied to the participants to adapt

the knowledge and skills learned. In the fourth stage, assessment occurs from the results of the transfer of knowledge, skills and attitudes of the participants.

The effectiveness of the training can also be assisted with several features as indicated by Senin (2008) and Kobia (2004) that professional trainers can transfer skills to trainees, and design and model an orderly and effective training. According to Michael (2011 and Praharsai 2009 cited in Jeganathan, 2007), the integration of religious education with fully equipped modern technology creates presence of high desire and motivation that helps speed the learning process. Thus, in providing proper training to the repented juveniles a systematic training model for effective integration of vocational training and education can help the transformation of trainees even better. This model can be used as a guide to the effectiveness of the training program drawn up by the administrative manager at the rehabilitation centres.

2. BACKGROUND OF RESEARCH

There are a few rehabilitation centers in Malaysia like PERKID in Selangor, Sekolah Tunas Bakti (STB) in Melaka, Taman Seri Puteri Cheras (TSP) in Kuala Lumpur, and Raudhatus Sakinah (RS) in Johor. Munad (2012) reported that RS was established as a rehabilitation center that provides shelter and guidance to young women who were victims of social ills. RS helps teenagers to build confidence and strengthens their ability to become a useful person to society and religion through their training model. According to the RS Manager (Mat, April 8, 2012), the existence of a rehabilitation centre for juveniles like RS is to provide shelter, guidance and vocational training to delinquent girls. Here, there is no structured training system used. The training schedule is set. The vocational training program is not integrated with Islamic education. All the instructors comprised volunteers who are not formally trained. Only 70 % of the program's guidance and vocational training to the trainees effectively brought about changes and improvements after 13 months of counselling at RS. There are also cases of returned trainees to the center. Training at the rehabilitation center for knowledge and skills forms the major asset. Therefore, the trainees should master knowledge and skills prepared by trained teachers. When the transfer exercise cannot produce knowledge retention, attitude change, and changes in work performance in the misbehaving teenagers then this effort is considered an investment that is wasted (Yang, 2011).

A study done by Stein, Deberard & Homan (2013) regarding success and failure in juvenile drug treatment shows that more than 60% of the adolescent participants failed to graduate successfully from the program. This is probably due to such factors as differences in program criteria for success. Failure of rehabilitation programs has also been proven by Ishak (2011) through a research training program related to religious training program for women at the Center for Protection of Women Baitul Ehsan. For instance, there are trainees who still returned to the former habits despite attending a moral and religious training program. Based on a study by Hamzah (2009), the impact of Islamic Education Development training on female prisoners, from classroom 11-A, who were commercial sex workers in the Malang Women's Prison also failed because the allotted time was too limited where Islamic Religious Education

classes were held for only three days in a month. According to Yahya, Rahman Hamdan and Boon (2001), training at women rehabilitation centres in the Seri Puteri Cheras, Jerantut, Rembau and Tunas Bakti Sungai Lereh, Malacca were also not effective because the trainers were not certified and qualified. The Islamic education classes were boring and incomplete and the facilities were not suitable and setting not conducive. This claim is supported by Yahaya and Wahab (2008) who said that the training programs at Taman Seri Puteri Batu Gajah, Perak and Kuala Lumpur Dar-Assa'dah complex for female delinquency shows that vocational programs were less effective because the culinary vocational program focused only on the subject of food preparation and not on food production. Co-curricular programs were less effective because the activity was focused on sports activities whereby all those activities were only conducted to fill time and no appreciation and recognition given for achievement or trainee mentoring program provided. The counselling program was less effective due to a lack of knowledge and skills on the part of the trainers. By right, all counsellors should have extensive knowledge and creativity for the job.

Systematic training allows us to transform delinquents into knowledgeable individuals (k-workers) for the employment sector. **Figure 1** shows the researcher's integrated model of Tippet Vocational Training (2003) and Ibn Khaldun's Islamic Educational (Sharul, 2008).

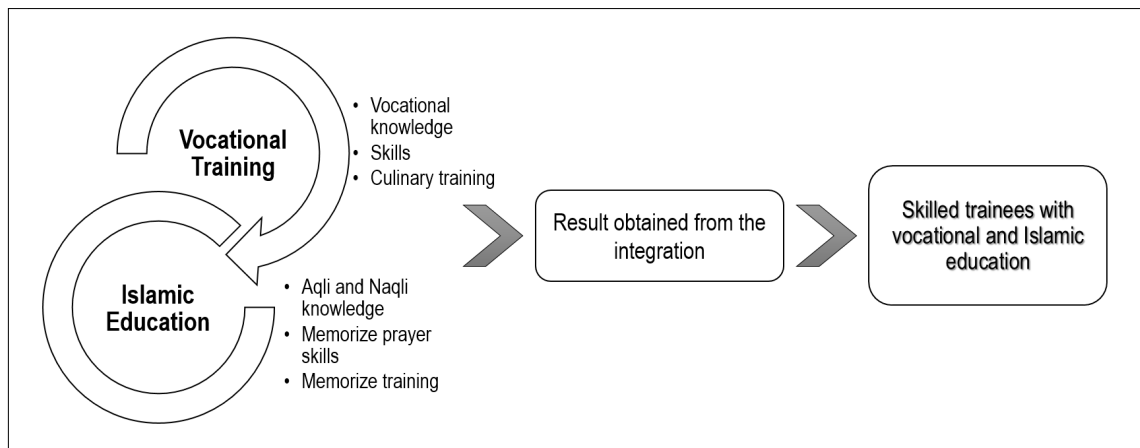


Figure 1: Model of Tippet Vocational Training (2003) and Ibn Khaldun's Islamic Educational (Sharul, 2008)

Generally, this model consists of five integrations. Firstly, regarding vocational knowledge (Tippet) and Aqli dan Naqli knowledge. Secondly, the knowledge to be learned by the trainees through culinary vocational training and memorization skills prayer in Islamic education (Ibn Khaldun). Next, culinary training methods (Tippet) and prayer (Ibn Khaldun). Fourth, the effect of training resulted in the physical, spiritual, emotional, and intellectual development (Tippet and Ibn Khaldun). Lastly, this model produces highly skilled trainees with vocational and Islamic education (Tippet and Ibn Khaldun). This model helps towards producing quality graduates of the JRCs.

3. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The aim of teenage rehabilitation centers is to systematic provide vocational training programs for juvenile delinquents to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for the job market upon completion of their training. However, based on preliminary studies and literature review, there is a lack or no training institution that provides vocational training and education that is very structured and systematic. This causes a lack of vocational skills and education on the part of the trainees with regard to their character building Therefore, this study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of a newly developed integrated culinary vocational training and Islamic education curriculum implemented at JRCs in Malaysia.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Study setting, design and participants

This is a descriptive survey (Burns, 2002). It involved a sample of 92 trainees selected from 4 JRCs in Malaysia. The respondents were chosen based on age, gender, nature of pregnancy (married or unmarried) who attended the Integrated Culinary Vocational Training and Islamic Education Program (ICVTI)

4.2 Study instrument

A set of questionnaire was developed for data collection from the trainees. The questionnaire set consisted of 5 sections; A) Demographic, B) Culinary vocational training, C) Islamic education, D) Integration of Culinary vocational training and Islamic education and E) The effects of ICVTI. Data from the questionnaire were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 20.0 for mean and standard deviation. Interpretation of mean scores was conducted by measuring the degree of consensus over the impact of the integration of trainees attending ICVTI program.

A semi-structured interview (Foster & Mouly, 2006; Merriam, 2001) was also used as the second data collection tool for the research, which involved four managers, four cooks, four Islamic education teachers and four trainees. According to Kumar (2010), semi-structured interviews can provide a lot of data, both accurate and detailed. Data were analysed based on the interview transcripts that had been collected from the interviewees. The transcripts were analysed based on 1) Culinary vocational training, 2) Islamic education, 3) Integration of ICVTI, and 4) The effects of ICVTI.

5. RESULTS

Table 1 shows the findings of the study on the effect of integrated ICVTI in JRCs in Malaysia. It was found that the average overall mean was 4.4409 with a standard deviation of 0.47899. This result shows that respondents agree that there was a positive outcome when they enrolled for rehabilitation program in a JRC for women. There is a high mean value (4.76) for the item “culinary training required by the trainee”. This indicates that respondents agree that they do need the integrated culinary vocational training and Islamic education at the centres.

Table 1: Impact of integrating culinary vocational training and Islamic education

| Item No. | Item | Min | Standard Deviation |
|----------|--|-------------|--------------------|
| 49 | Islamic education needed by trainees | 4.67 | 0.665 |
| 50 | Culinary education needed by trainees | 4.76 | 0.562 |
| 51 | The integration of Islam education and culinary needed by trainees | 4.60 | 0.647 |
| 52 | Islamic education coaches have the knowledge | 4.60 | 0.556 |
| 53 | Culinary coaches have the skills | 4.66 | 0.579 |
| 54 | Interested in learning Islamic Education | 4.49 | 0.687 |
| 55 | Interested in learning culinary training | 4.58 | 0.667 |
| 56 | Interested to attend class that integrates Islamic educational with culinary | 4.38 | 0.888 |
| 57 | Motivated to attend classes in Islamic education | 4.27 | 0.813 |
| 58 | Motivated to attend classes on culinary | 4.43 | 0.746 |
| 59 | Motivated to attend class that integrates Islamic education with culinary | 4.37 | 0.780 |
| 60 | Good communication between the coach and trainees of Islamic education | 4.34 | 0.788 |
| 61 | Good communication between the coach and trainees of culinary training | 4.42 | 0.683 |
| 62 | Confident of getting a job after training at the center | 4.10 | 0.961 |
| 63 | Confident to open an eatery after undergoing training | 3.88 | 1.098 |
| 64 | Confident to provide food for the family | 4.50 | 0.791 |
| | Overall min scor on impact of integration of Culinary and Islamic education | 4.4409 | 0.47899 |

Results of Table 2 show that item no. 63 which is "confident to open eatery after training" has less number of respondents who do not agree with the item ($f=10$, $SD=1.098$). It describes a condition in which respondents have high confidence in their ability to open a business after attending training at the JRC for women.

Table 2: Item that has more than 1 standard deviation value of “effects of the integrated culinary vocational training and Islamic education”

| Item No. | Item | Standard Deviation | Scale (Frequency) | | | | |
|----------|---|--------------------|-------------------|---|----|----|----|
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 63 | Confident to open an eatery after undergoing training | 1.098 | 4 | 6 | 19 | 31 | 32 |

Interviews were also conducted to examine the effectiveness of the training followed by trainees. The interviews concerns ICVTI in terms of their confidence to open food outlets after completing training at their respective centres. Some extracts from the interviews are as follows:

"The trainee's interest in this ... God willing, possible, except that there must be support from the family. After this we do not provide service to open restaurants, or shop for food. "
(Manager of JRC B)

"God willing, possible... to open a stall or restaurant, if they are interested in..."
(Trainer of JRC A)

"With the skills available here, the opportunity to set up food stalls or a restaurant is bright..."
(Head Trainer, JRC A)

"God willing ... I can become an entrepreneur, for instance, opening a food stall or restaurant ..."
(Trainee, JRC D)

Feedback received from interviews conducted clearly show that the culinary trainees, instructors and administrators at the JRCs for women agreed that after the trainees completed the integrated Culinary vocational training and Islamic Education at the rehabilitation centre (JRC) they became confident to open a food outlet.

The trainees also agreed that they needed the integrated culinary vocational training in and Islamic Education as evident in the following excerpts:

"The integration between Islamic education and culinary, that thing... it is necessary for the trainees because everything we do must have their prayers."
(Trainee, JRC A)

"It is very necessary for the integration between the Islamic and culinary education for the trainee here."
(Trainee, JRC B)

The majority of respondents gave positive views of the JRC open item. A summary of the respondents feedback is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Analysis of the open item in the questionnaire set

| Item | Positive View | Negative View |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| 65. State your view regarding the training at this center. | 89 | 3 |
| 66. State your view regarding the integrated culinary vocational training and Islamic education | 91 | 0 |

Table 3 shows a total of 89 respondents with positive feedback regarding training at the JRCs, while three respondents gave negative feedback. Similarly, positive feedback by respondents on ICVTI was given by as many as 91 people and only one person did not provide any feedback. Overall, the respondents agreed that the curricula and training conducted at these centres were Good and all respondents also agreed about the feasibility of ICVTI at the JRCs.

Among the excerpts for positive responses are:

"I feel good about religious training, which that attracted me to memorize the Quran. I feel good about the culinary training here. I'm interested in all the trainings undertaken. "

(Respondent 89)

However, there were also respondents who were less satisfied with the JRC. Among other things, they said:

"Less satisfactory because there is not a lot of activity on how to cook better."

(Respondent 30)

The above excerpts clearly indicate that the trainees conveyed their dissatisfaction with the culinary training at the centre. Interview data also revealed trainees' expectations for improved training in culinary skills, as in the excerpt below:

"I wish there were volunteers who were willing to teach us to cook with certain prayers because we are cooking with no specific prayer."

(Head Coach JRC B)

In the context of ICVTI, all the trainees involved in the study agreed that the integration would have a positive impact on them. Among the feedback given, is as in the following excerpts:

"For me, the integration of culinary vocational training and Islamic education and is very necessary so that we can know what is permissible in Islam and what is forbidden in Islam."

(Respondent 51)

Generally, it can be concluded that ICVTI in Malaysian JRCs had a positive impact on the trainees. However, some activities need to be improved to enhance the training practice for the benefit of all trainees as recommended by the trainees and trainers.

6. DISCUSSION

The effect of ICVTI is discussed with reference to the fourth research question; “To what extent are the effects of ICVTI in JRCs based on the perception of the trainees?”. The effectiveness of the training can be assessed from the ongoing training process.

Results from the analysis of the overall study show that all the trainers agreed that they had a positive impression after the training at the respective JRCs. They also said that they desperately needed ICVTI at the centre. These findings are in accordance with the study done by Walsh (2011) which states that the model of good practice can create an atmosphere of cross-examination between the trainee and staff with the aim of enabling the trainees to gain knowledge and analyse each problem encountered. The findings also match with that of a training model by Elangovan and Karakowsky (1999) when the trainees showed interest and enthusiasm in culinary training with weekly exercises. Furthermore, there were factors that help culinary exercise such as cooking equipment, raw materials for cooking, teacher’s who is always ready to guide trainees to cook and always communicates well with trainees and adherence to rules and instructions.

The results also show that a number of critical factors have helped the success of effective integration. Among those factors are the curriculum, trainees’ interest and self-awareness, knowledge and skills, self-confidence and enthusiasm, communication skill and knowledgeable and skilled trainers. The findings demonstrate that the impact of ICVTI through appropriate curriculum will help trainees acquire knowledge and develop skills, encourage, persistence in the pursuit of knowledge and skills, inculcate patience, bring success through perseverance in their endeavours, and help the acquisition of knowledge and skills in the process (before, during and after). Islamic education provides both trainers and trainees with the satisfaction to improve training practices.

The effectiveness of the training also gives confidence to the trainees to work and secure employment including running a business. According to Esa *et. al* (2015), entrepreneurship and self management, problem solving, and technology skills were one of the most wanted skills. The findings, equals Kirkpatrick Model (1987), which suggests a four-stage evaluation of the effectiveness of the training of trainees satisfactory formulated training curriculum, assessment related to the knowledge, skills and attitudes related to the assessment of the application of what is learned on the job-related training and assessment which have been carried out. Another important findings, is that several factors point to the effectiveness of deep training of the trainees in the training transformation program. Factors like awareness, will and enthusiasm motivates the trainees towards studying hard in order to be skilful. This is consistent with a study by Walsh (2011), which suggests willingness and interest factors, will affect the effectiveness of the training and produce more successful trainees.

Confidence factors in the trainees promote high commitment and the ability to become self-employed entrepreneurs and own a shop, restaurant or become salaried workers, According to Mohamad Salleh (2008) vocational training helps to produce skilled workers who are motivated and well paid. Competitive training produces workers who are efficient, motivated, creative and innovative providing positive impacts on the country's development, (Akinwumiju, 2010; Mohd Yassin, (2012). Good communication between the organization and leadership is another factor that will also help the transfer of effective training (Babarinsa, 2011). The high mean and standard deviation from the study reflect good communication among the trainees and trainers at the JRCs.

However, there is also a small number of trainees who felt dissatisfied with the integrated culinary vocational training in and Islamic Education conducted by teachers at the JRCs. Study done by Boon and Mohd Yunus (2008) reported that juvenile probation was unchanged at one JRC caused by teaching methods that are not effective when applied in the classroom. The trainees also expected improvements in training, especially with regard to certain religious prayers for cooking. The finding, matched the views by Zaonegin (2011) that improvements were needed to overcome weaknesses.

With regard to ICVTI the trainees agreed that the integration provides a positive impact on the trainers and trainees. According to a study conducted by Jeremy (2009) the integration program in the United Evangelical Lutheran Church with emphasis on religious practice whereby trainees often carry out religious activities was successful. The integration also involved the integration of various developments such as in the development of curriculum evaluation as surveyed by Walliman (2015) that developed a comprehensive and integrated life. This integration is also in agreement with that of a study by Kluver and Cheong (2007) who reported that individuals who adhere to religious beliefs can be self-guided in their ethical and responsible use of the internet.

This study is of significance for the trainees who are already in JRCs. The trainees who earnestly studied to master the theoretical and practical aspects of the culinary vocational training and Islamic Education at the JRCs can gain positive outcomes, especially in terms of developing culinary skills with a deep knowledge of Islam; hence, they can obtain jobs whether employed by others or become entrepreneurs. They need to understand that the opportunities gained by following a training program can not only improve the shortcomings of the past, but promise a bright future for the trainees themselves.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the discussions, the awareness, confidence and enthusiasm of appropriate training curricula; good communication between the coach and the manager, culinary instructor, and teacher of Islamic education; and the knowledge and skills of teachers of Islamic education and culinary trainers have been very encouraging. The trainees also believe that ICVTI will enable them to open a business and secure employment upon completion of training at the respective JRCs..

Among the proposals made were the need to include prayers and religious stories and the heavenly rewards related to culinary skills in the Islamic education syllabus. In ICVTI, the management of the JRCs need to include culinary prayer in the Islamic education syllabus so that the objective of the integration can be executed simultaneously during the culinary training sessions. Similarly, there is a need for stories related to the history of Islam that culinary goodness leads to heaven either before or after the cooking. With appreciation and assurance Allah will open the doors of the trainee's heart to ensure they regularly carry out the integration of Islam and culinary vocational education.

A general conclusion to be drawn from the present review is that JRCs in Malaysia have successfully implemented the integrated culinary vocational training and Islamic Education in terms of knowledge and skills. Therefore, researchers suggest the other JRCs at international level may want to consider the use of Tippet Vocational Training model (2003) and Ibn Khaldun's Islamic Educational (Sharul, 2008) for their education and vocational training that have show to improve the current program effectively.

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