MALAYSIAN ONLINE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1, 2013

Integrating Internship and Business Simulation into The Malaysian Business Studies Curriculum

Chiew Wye Mei & Saedah Siraj

Faculty of Education,
University of Malaya.

Corresponding Author:
Faculty of Education,
University of Malaya.
chiewwm@yahoo.com
012-68713978

ABSTRACT

This study looks into the perceptions of Business Studies curriculum stakeholders' on the introduction of internship and business simulation into the Business Studies curriculum for Form Six students. The initial exploration of the present Business Studies curriculum showed school leavers lack business skills. Interviews were carried out on 51 stakeholders using the Modified Delphi method. Interviews showed that majority of the stakeholders place high importance on the acquisition of practical skills by students before joining the business world. Internship and business simulation were suggested. The result was further verified by 14 experts chosen from the stakeholders and consensus obtained showed that while internship was highly supported, the actual implementation would be difficult to carry out. Business Simulations, on the other hand, was found to be more acceptable. The practicality of the curriculum was tested via survey on teachers and results show the curriculum is highly acceptable by all.

Keywords: **internship, business simulation, business studies curriculum**

INTRODUCTION

Business Education is education about business and education for business (Popham, Schrag, and Blockhus, 1971). Even though there is a lack of linkage between business schools and industry, as shown by some past researches on business education (Lightfoot, 1999; Garneau & Brennan, 1999; Lucas & Milford, 2003; Mintzberg, 2004), Wong and Fong (2008), Wong (2008) studies showed these two different factions are converging as the as the business community now prefers business graduates with theoretical grounding, and academicians had begun to teach using liberal-vocational business curriculum.

Globalisation and increased international connectivity has resulted in demands for a more global education model. An innovative curriculum is needed to address these challenges and give much attention to the needs of the local businesses (Association of Asia-Pacific Business Schools [AAPBS], 2012). Revision of a business school curriculum has to be conducted. AAPBS suggested a need to ensure business schools are more effectively engaged with their community.

In Malaysia, the secondary business education programs enable form six students to move into the workforce or post-secondary education after sitting for this subject in the Malaysian Higher School Certificate (MHSC) or Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia examination (STPM, equivalent to the U.K. 'Advance Level' Examination). Yet, in reality, present students who were unable to further their studies to higher institutions due to poor MHSC academic results were left in limbo, with only knowledge of business but hardly any business skills. Furthermore, there are comments from corporations that Malaysian graduates with a background in business are lacking in skills and knowledge. The study by the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (Bernama, 2010) stated graduates lack industrial training, have poor command of the English language, low problem solving skills, like to job-hop and lack self-confidence. Moreover, business communities and corporations lamented that graduates and college students (includes school students) are unable to compose a simple business letter or critically think through a complex business problem.

The Malaysian Government had implemented the 1Mal¬aysia Training Scheme Program to increase graduate employability through soft-skills training and on-the-job training in private companies through double deduction on expenses incurred by the companies (Budget 2013, 2012). Further steps planned by Malaysia to overcome this problem is to launch the Graduate Employability Blueprint (Bernama, 2012) by the end of 2012 to assist graduates who are still unemployed to seek employment. The seriousness of the Malaysian Government to tackle this problem is reflected in the huge allocation (RM200 million) for this project (Budget 2013, 2012).

There is an urgent need to ensure Malaysian graduates from schools and universities are ready for the future business environment, and the curriculum of Business Studies should reflect what is wanted by the business community. The ever increasing demand for a skilled workforce and able entrepreneurs reflects the need to study the ability of schools to produce skilful small scale entrepreneurs. Dewey's ideal of "education through occupations" (Dow, 2002) reflected the need for a pragmatic curriculum.

The viability of Business Studies in schools lies in the ability to produce business students who are able to meet the future well prepared. The present form six Business Studies curriculum of Malaysia has topics such as Business and its environment, Management function, Business function, Rules and business needs, Entrepreneurship, Cooperatives and non-governmental organization, International business, Ethics and social responsibilities, and Communication. Unfortunately, when a preliminary document analysis was conducted on this curriculum, there were no practical work stated to be carried out by teachers and students. This shows a possibility of the curriculum being inadequate to answer the needs for skilled business school leavers. It is possible a gap exists in the intended curriculum of Business Studies for sixth formers and the needs of future businesses.

This study tries to explore the existence of the stated gap and the necessity to propose the inclusion of practical work (such as internship and business simulation) into the present Business Studies curriculum to narrow the gap. Stakeholders of this subject were consulted to analyze the content of this subject. The resultant of the new Business Study curriculum from this study was forwarded to the Malaysian Examination

Council (MEC), the body in charge of the development of form six curricula. This study hopes with the new Business Studies curriculum the gap between business job opportunities and graduates of Business Studies from upper secondary schools would be narrowed.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Internship

Dhesi and Lee (2011) interviewed Malaysian prominent business professionals and found that there seemed to be a gap between the planned curriculum of business education of universities and the expected outcome of graduates produced. Many studies conducted in other countries and Malaysia concur with Wong's (2008) study, which affirmed gaps between the intended curriculum provided by the business educators and the curriculum expected of the business community. Wong (2008) further found that the gap is due to different perceptions about education, where academicians were concerned with 'education for life' and the business community with 'education for work'. This brings about the building of researcher questions on whether such similar scenario is occurring at school level too. The problem of school leavers (and graduates) needing to be re-skilled and armed with the right knowledge to meet employers' needs shows an uncertainty of the extent of business education in meeting the demand of the business community.

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO, 2010), developing countries, especially in Africa and South East Asia, are experiencing growth in the working age population, yet most impacted by the loss of jobs. The most marginalized group of young people (age 15-24) are those who not only lack jobs but are no longer in school, either. In the jargon of economists, these are the so-called NEETs, youngsters not in employment, education or training. Index Mundi (2012) shows South Africa's youth unemployment rate is 48.2%, Namibia 41.7%, Indonesia 22.2%, Philippine 17.4% and Singapore 12.9%. In Malaysia, the youth unemployment rate is 11.3% in 2010 (CIA – The World Fact book, 2013) dropping to 10.9% in 2012 (Index Mundi, 2012). Even though the figure is not very high, nevertheless there is still a need to lower the percentage.

The most recent report by ILO (2013) on global employment trends for youth shows that global youth unemployment rate which has decreased from 12.7% in 2009 to 12.3% in 2011, has increased again to 12.4% in 2012, and has continued to grow to 12.6% in 2013. This is 1.1 percentage points above the pre-crisis level in 2007 (11.5%). By 2018, the global youth unemployment rate is projected to rise to 12.8%, with growing disparities, as expected improvements in advanced economies will be offset by increases in youth unemployment in other regions, mainly in Asia.

ILO (2013) states that 73.4 million young people – 12.6% – are expected to be out of work in 2013, an increase of 3.5 million between 2007 and 2013. Rising youth unemployment and falling labor force participation contributed to a decrease in the global youth employment-to-population ration to 42.3% in 2013, compared with 44.8% in 2007. Part of this decrease is due to rising enrolment in education. The global employment-to-population ratio is projected to be 41.4% in 2018. Young people continue to be almost three times more likely than adult to be unemployed and the upward trend in global unemployment continues to hit them strongly. ILO states that behind these figures shows persistent unemployment, a proliferation of temporary jobs and growing youth discouragement in advanced economies; and poor quality, informal, subsistence jobs in developing countries.

The above staggering figures are of global concern and efforts to discuss ways to reduce the figures are on-going among many agencies, such as within the ILO, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), World Economic Forum (WEF), etc. Several factors set apart countries with a relatively low proportion of NEETs and those with high unemployment rates. One main factor is the low unemployment rate countries, such as Germany, have particularly extensive professional training programs for young people. In Germany's apprenticeship schemes, youths start their apprenticeship early, at age 15 or 16, and mix classroom time with practical experience on the factory floor. The training lasts between one and a half to three years and by the time the students finished, most apprentices move straight into full-time employment.

Education and training are essential for young people to enter the labor market successfully as they increase their potential productivity and employability. In developed economies, education also serves as a shield against unemployment for many youth, and there is a strong link between educational attainment and employment outcomes. If school leavers and graduates possessed entrepreneurial skills and knowledge, the rate of unemployment could be reduced as they can strive to set up their own businesses. Tapsir (2013) revealed that only 40% of the Malaysian workforce consists of skilled workers. This low percentage shows the urgency for Malaysia to increase the number of skilled workforce.

Program on business industry working together with schools have been propounded by Hull and Grevelle (1998). They suggested four main programs, namely business industries as advisors, students joining the workplace, educators joining the workplace and business industries in schools. As mentioned earlier, Germany is successful in reducing youth unemployment due to her apprenticeship schemes. "Internships" differ from apprenticeships in that interns are usually exploring different career paths, are unpaid and usually work part time. "Apprenticeship" is for workers who have decided on a career path and are willing to receive on-the-job training at a lower salary than persons fully qualified in that field.

Higgins (2008) suggested business leaders coordinate work with teachers to help them develop their own relationships with local firms will give the business people a real say and stake in the curriculum, while respecting the expertise of the teaching profession. Students are being prepared for contexts, rather than studying in isolation. The students find that placements require time and expense, but at the end of it

they understand what the workplace is really like, and they learn how to apply the skills they have learned in the classroom. Higgins's (2008) study proved suggestions by Hull and Grevell (1998) as being practical and effective.

Hodges and Burchell (2003) demonstrated in an intensive survey of business organizations in New Zealand, that most employers want graduates to be more 'work-ready' and they believe that this can be achieved through work experience. Apprenticeship, as part of the curriculum would be of benefit. Harmer (2009) too proposed that learning and teaching would be enhanced for all stakeholders if students experienced the real-life complexities of actual organizations either before, or in the early part, of their degree programmes. This would serve the dual purpose of allowing the students to better comprehend the taught content as it relates to real life, while continuing to enhance their eventual employability in the same way that many existing placement schemes aim to do. Paiseya and Paisey (2009) stated that studies have shown students and employers involved in work placements agree on the effectiveness of interning in developing a range of skills. Internship complements more traditional structured degrees (Paiseya & Paisey, 2009) and improves students' academic self-concepts and encourages critical thinking and reflective approaches to learning (Rodriguez, 2009).

Despite the growing popularity of internships, Narayanan, Olk, and Fukami (2010) reminded readers that internship is a transfer of learning and knowledge. Their study of undergraduates in Portugal showed that companies engaged interns to acquire inexpensive human capital, and internships offer employees the opportunity to observe an intern on the job. The university's programme of internship was to facilitate 2-way knowledge transfer, and the authors found evidence that suggested transfer to the university (via faculty) was minimal. Although the participants in the sample they tracked were undergraduates, it was clear to them that in many scientific-based industries (e.g., pharmaceuticals) extended to postdoctoral work as well. They further stated that internship programmes should give students a voice to enhance the student's overall satisfaction. Furthermore, time should be spent on developing a project with a focused scope, such as to provide students with an opportunity to learn specific knowledge. Mentoring is important for students' satisfactions, at least from the student's perspective, but does not appear to be as important for student learning or implementation.

A recent study commissioned by The UK Commission for Employment and Skills (2012) looked at the perceptions and experiences of businesses when working with schools to build the world of work into education. It is found that businesses were able to enrich and enhance the delivery of education and building the world of work in general into education, plan and provide work experience opportunities, and provide careers information and raising the profile of careers in a sector. Unfortunately, only six per cent of employers are prepared to offer a young person their first job. Significantly, those that do are usually pleased with their new recruits, finding them well prepared for work. Yet many more are put off employing young people, frequently citing their lack of experience. Employers want staff who are literate and numerate, personable, competent, and hard-working. These are the core "employability" skills that transform pupils and students into credible candidates for employment.

Business Simulation

Education should prepare individuals for real-world situations. At times due to logistics or financial reasons, an internship could not be carried out even though many studies have proven their effectiveness in developing employable skills. This dilemma can be resolved with multiple approaches, tools and collaborations (Mather & Champagne, 2008). One kind of approach is as suggested by Johnson and Helms

(2008) using business case studies which they found to be relevant and helpful for effective teaching. The early use of a local company case can illustrate key course concepts to improve students' interest and understanding.

Another approach to obtain experiential learning is to use business simulation games. Ahn's (2008) study on using Kolb's experiential learning cycle together with a business simulation game showed students had positive perceptions of their learning experience given the chance to learn with simulation. Business simulation games for providing authentic, challenging, interactive, and interesting mode of learning core disciplinary ideas were further demonstrated by Foster's (2009) and Egereonu's (2011) studies. Talwar and Hancock (2010) recommended virtual worlds and simulations as critical to experiential learning from medicine to ship repair.

Business simulation games (Summers, 2004) have the capabilities and qualities to provide behavioral simulations, online feedback and coaching, advanced interfaces, learning on demand, and the ability to teach specific knowledge. An example of the effectiveness of using the business simulation games was the study by Kovalik and Kuo (2012) who found that students using the 'Diffusion Simulation Games' in an online higher educational course helped the students to understand and apply the course content and gave the instructor insight into the importance of clearly identifying learning goals and the need for debriefing before the usage of games or simulations for learning.

Fischler's (2006) study cautioned against adding advanced technological tools for the sake of using them. He asserted an educational simulation tool will have little effect on learning unless it is integrated well into the curriculum. Gee (2007) further expounded that without the guidance of educators / instructors, learners learning through simulation games would have a high probability of finding creative but spurious patterns and generalizations that would send learners down misleading paths. The idea of business simulation games being incorporated into the Business Studies futuristic curriculum would be posed to stakeholders and experts.

Podolny (2009) suggested a multipronged approach to tackling the problem of unethical business professionals: curriculum that emphasizes the integration of several disciplines and link analytics with ethics; and advocates team teaching that rope in professors from different fields to give students a holistic approach to business issues. Hoivik (2009) agreed that business students should early on be offered a course presenting and analysing ethical dilemmas they will face as human beings both in the business world and in society, but in literature format. Literary texts offer excellent descriptions of the circumstances or the organizational settings in which people find themselves. This is one way to sensitise students without business experience when they are still open to such a formative learning process and can critically expose some of the weak or the missing aspects of various management theories students encounter in their business curriculum and make them more observant and critical.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study proposed Eisner's Connoisseurship Model, Campbell and Rozsnyai (2002), Gross and Godwin (2005), as well as Cadora (2008) and others whom propounded the importance of consensus and deliberation by stakeholders be taken into account in the design of the Business Studies curriculum. Kolb's

(1984) theory of experiential learning which advocated the importance of hands-on learning, and reminders from Fullan's and Stiegelbaur's (1991) theory of change, and Reigeluth's and Garfinkel's (1994) systemic change model were also used to support the theoretical framework. Next the prediction of future businesses (events) (Talwar & Hancock, 2010) which could be done by stakeholders (experts) in their respective fields was also incorporated into the framework. The curriculum consonance model by Brown (2007) was modified into Figure 1, which shows the futuristic Business Studies curriculum model, which takes in account future needs in the planning of a curriculum.

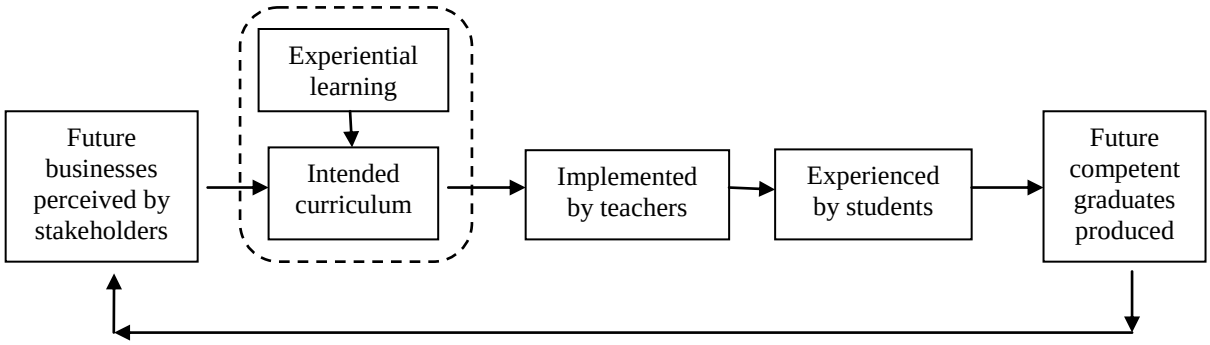

Figure 1. Proposed futuristic Business Studies curriculum model.

The research suggested that projection of future business is being first acknowledged, as proposed by Talwar and Hancock (2010). With this acknowledgement, it is hoped that a better and more appropriate curriculum could then be planned. If there is any gap between what is desired and what is produced, this framework could help narrow or close the gap. Next, experiential learning which is heavily emphasised by Kolb (1985, as well as earlier writers such as Dewey, Lewin and Piaget) should be part of the intended curriculum. The output of the curriculum is future entrepreneurs that are competent, and they in turn could continue on the legacy of predicting and planning better, newer future curricula. Future businesses perceived by stakeholders would affect the stakeholders' perceptions of what is knowledge and skill is necessary for students to acquire in order to be ready for the future business world. This study will only discuss the factors inside the dotted box; which is the practical experiences needed and the intended curriculum, as the objective of research is to study the relevance of the present Business Studies curriculum and to design a new curriculum.

With the pragmatic worldview stance, this research has chosen the methodology to be of mixed methods. As all methods have limitations, biases inherent in any single method could neutralise biases in other methods. Furthermore, the result of one method can help identify questions to ask for in another method (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998) and / or enhances the study. This study used the Developmental Research Approach (DRA). DRA blends theory and practice. According to Richey, Klien and Nelson (2004), the 'developmental' research studies the effectiveness of a design, develops a better design, and evaluates the new design. Nieveen, McKenney, and Akker (2006) designed guidelines for building curriculum that encourages collaboration while guarding academic rigour and generating credible, trustworthy and plausible design principles. Nieveen et al.'s (2006) call for collaboration supports Eisner's (1985) theory of

consensus and deliberation among stakeholders, and Fullan's (1991) theory of change which insisted on stakeholders' involvement. As suggested by Akker, Gravemeijier, and Nieveen (2009), DRA makes both practical and scientific contributions. Interaction with practitioners (or stakeholders, the term used in this study) like teachers, policy makers etc. is needed in the search for innovative solutions. These interactions can help to clarify the problems and the characteristics of its potential solution. In addition, interactions with practitioners give benefits in both social and technical context and helps improve the solution's relevance in the real world. DRA is a systematic study consisting three phases, i.e. the needs analysis phase (Phase 1); the design and development phase (Phase 2); and the evaluation phase (Phase 3).

Procedure

Phase 1, is the needs analysis phase. It was the initial starting phase of developmental research where information on the context and environment was gathered. Based on the analysis, recommendations on solutions to problems would then be made. When the current curriculum and 'required' curriculum were compared, gaps would be noted. Gaps would suggest a functional change, and functional change usually brings about threats. The advantage of having conducted a needs assessment is that there is a database for suggested changes, and the logical rational educator (as well as any other stakeholders in curriculum development) would have an easier time resolving change requirements and resulting change. In the needs analysis phase, a qualitative method using semi-structured interview was carried out on the direct users of the present Business Studies curriculum. The direct users of the Business Studies curriculum are teachers and form six students. Hence, the participants for the interviews were chosen from the population of teachers and ex-students of Business Studies curriculum.

Convenient purposive snowball sampling consisting of eleven trainer teachers of Business Studies curriculum and teachers of more than five years' experience in teaching and using the Business Studies curriculum were chosen as they are considered experts in their field. Their perceptions in this field provided a deep insight as to the strength and weaknesses of this curriculum. These teachers are from five out of sixteen states in Malaysia. Another group of purposive snowball samples consisting of eleven ex-students of the present Business Studies curriculum was also chosen to represent the voices of the curriculum users. Ex-students that have completed the form six course, chosen by the institutions of higher learning (public universities in Malaysia), and are presently studying various types of sub-business education courses in the said institutions were chosen. The students' perceptions of the effectiveness and usefulness of the Business Studies curriculum at their present institutions would reflect the said objectives of Form Six Business Studies curriculum as a student feeder to institutions of higher learning, as stated by the Malaysian Examination Council (1998). Purposive snowball samples were used, as samples were not easily available due to lack of address or background information. The number of samples used was determined by the saturation of data gathered, and it is a coincidence the similarity of numbers samples between teachers and students. An example of the interview questions are:

- List the strength and weaknesses of the Business Studies curriculum and explain why you said so.
- What topics should be incorporated into or taken out from the Business Studies curriculum?

The results of the needs analysis were used to determine the questions to be used in the interview protocol in Phase 2 as well as suggestions to be included in the future curriculum of Business Studies. Phase two uses the Modified Delphi method and is divided into two stages: Phase 2 (a) and Phase 2 (b). Phase 2 (a) is to identify the stakeholders' perceptions of curriculum that should be learnt by form six

students in Business Studies to meet future business needs. Interviews were carried out on 51 stakeholders representing the business community, academicians, curriculum developers, non-government leaders, religious leaders, teachers and government bodies. Result from the interview was then used to build a questionnaire which consisted of the proposed Prototype I Future Business Curriculum Model. Phase 2 (b) is to obtain consensus from experts of the Prototype I built in round 1 using the modified Delphi method. The rounds will continue till consensus was met. The purpose of these rounds was to validate Prototype I. The modified Delphi technique was selected for use in this study due to its ability to obtain expert input from individuals who are widely dispersed geographically. Furthermore, from the viewpoint of a participant, if a questionnaire is easy to respond to and less time-consuming, he/she is more likely to complete and return the questionnaire. Prototype I would be refined into Prototype II. Prototype II consisting questionnaire and the curriculum was pilot tested and the Cronbach's alpha value was .93, which shows that the instrument is reliable.

The third phase of this study in the evaluation phase. The purpose of this phase was to evaluate and validate Prototype II, in other words, to do a reality check of the Prototype of Future Business Studies curriculum model. The population for phase 3 of this study was estimated to be 1497 teachers teaching the Business Studies curriculum from 600 schools in Malaysia. As the population was small, the questionnaire was mailed to all schools offering this subject in the whole of Malaysia as this method is economical, can reach a geographically dispersed sample of a population and facilitate quick data collection (Creswell, 2008). Even though the response rate was 28.2%, the Normality Test using Kolmogorov-Smirnov as well as Shapiro-Wilk show .000 for both tests, indicating the data is normal, and thus accepted for the study. The result from the survey carried out in this phase provided this study with the practicality of the prototype of the future Business Studies curriculum model. The acceptance of the model would be the proposed curriculum to be forwarded to the Malaysian Examination Council as a probable future Business Studies curriculum incorporating topics suggested by the stakeholders of the curriculum.

Data Analysis

The needs mentioned by ex-students were quite similar to the needs as wanted by the teachers. The result showed a strong need by both teachers (63.3%) and students (72.7%) for some form of practical work; they suggested internship and also business simulation, to ensure students are able to apply what they have learnt. There were mixed perceptions as to what form of practical work to be carried out as some stated internship did not seem practical for schools due to the limited time frame and preferred business simulations, while others were against simulation and internship due to time constraint. This needs analysis phase demonstrated a strong need to revamp the Business Studies curriculum due to the lack of hands-on experiences to ensure the objectives of the curriculum, i.e. to prepare students to enter institutions of higher learning and / or produce entrepreneurs, were met.

Examples of feedbacks from students:

S1 at S1/C/W/13 said, "The weakness (of Business Studies) is we learnt theory only. But luckily, (my) teacher did one week of practical (even though not required by the curriculum)."

S3 at S3/C/W/99 said, "For me, I see schools give very little practical for Business Studies…when we work, I see (what we've learnt in) theory is different (from), actually in companies, different (comparing real situation with what was learnt)… In school less practical."

An examples of feedback from a teacher:

Participant T6 at T6/S/S/47 said, "…we only exposed the theory, but there is no practical. (We just) hoped the students can visualize it."

The result of this phase showed students wanting practical work but the curriculum not providing internship. This shows an undeniable reason to modify and revamp the curriculum.

The second phase of the study was to obtain other stakeholders' perception of their wants from Business Studies curriculum and the graduates of this curriculum and to obtain verification from experts of the Prototype I built. Data from interviews showed that majority of the stakeholders place high importance on the acquisition of practical skills by students before joining the business world. They suggested internship and business simulation to be included into the curriculum. The result was then verified by 14 experts chosen from the stakeholders using the Modified Delphi method. Thus, Prototype I of the Business Studies curriculum consists of Internship and Business Simulation. Prototype I was modified and re-ranked into Prototype II.

When Prototype II curriculum was tested for its practicality on Malaysian teachers via survey in the third phase, the result shows the majority of the teachers are wholly supportive of the curriculum. Even though the teachers are wholly supportive of internship, the actual implementation would be difficult to be carried out. Business Simulation on the other hand, was found to be more acceptable.

DISCUSSION

Teachers claimed students would not be able to perform or have confidence to become entrepreneurs due to the non-existence of practical work in the present Business Studies curriculum. Students themselves desired practical work. This was reflected in the students' voicing their needs specifically for them as they perceived these topics as being very crucial in building up their confidence in functioning more effectively as business students or entrepreneurs. The students said that they have no confidence to be entrepreneurs, even though they are taught the fundamentals of what is necessary to be entrepreneurs, due to the lack of practical exposure in Form Six. They would like to have a short stint of practical work though they are not sure how much time could be allocated in the curriculum as lack of time is a huge factor in finishing the syllabus.

Results from the needs analysis and design phases supported the latest Malaysia Education blueprint unveiled by the Malaysian Prime Minister on 12 September 2012 which emphasises a practical and application kind of curriculum (Chapman, Loo, Kulasagaran, Mohsin, Goon, Ng, & Kaos Jr., 2012). Such desires by both teachers and students support the Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 1999), which suggests a holistic model of the learning process and a multi-linear model of adult development as important in learning; knowledge is created through the transformation of experience and thus concurs with the desires for experiential learning. In the emerging, networked world of information-based economies, learning has become more important than productivity in determining a person's or an organization's adaptation, survival, and growth (Kelly, 1999). Students would need to learn

and gather new knowledge, skills, and values to be able to contribute to society effectively. The chain effect of these demands of the business environments to tertiary institutions would see students from upper secondary schools capable of meeting the demand of universities and the business community.

The results showed Internship and Business Simulation were methods proposed to be added to increase students' business skills. These items were suggested due to many stakeholders (especially those from the business industry) encountering or had the experiences of hiring many graduates from tertiary institutions and school leavers with no confidence in communication, nor skills to apply what they have learnt. The suggestion for implementation of internship in the Business Studies curriculum supports Narayanan et al. (2010) study findings of internship as important to knowledge acquirements. Baden and Parkes (2013) study on entrepreneurship students shows that the opportunity to work with social entrepreneurs and/or "responsible" business professionals provides the business students with inspirational role models and positive social learning opportunities. Their study shows that experiential learning is an effective way of integrating ethics, responsibility and sustainability into the business curriculum.

Furthermore, the suggestion to introduce Business simulation games illustrates the stakeholders' confidence in the usage of such method of learning as effective to train students in the art of doing business, as voiced by Summers (2004; Kovalik & Kuo, 2012), and Wei Li's (2013) study using Web-mediated ESP Learning (business simulation as part of experiential learning) gave further prove that students supports business simulation in learning.

Akker (2003, 2010) and Nieveen (2007) stated a curriculum must be well planned and valid to ensure the end product is acceptable and usable. This brings to the last part of this study, where the Prototype II is checked for its practicality by the actual users which are the Business Studies teachers. Feedback from the teachers showed that the curriculum is well accepted; unfortunately internship most welcomed by stakeholders, experts as well as teachers to be included in the curriculum may be difficult to be carried out due to the lack of time. Secondly, business simulations could probably be a much more practical way to overcome this lack of time problem.

Mather and Champagne (2008), Johnson and Helms (2008), Ahn (2008), Egereonu (2011) and many others have proven the effectiveness of simulation business games in their studies. Simulation is shown to be highly accepted as important by teachers in the study and thus can be a more acceptable form of business 'practical work' to overcome shortage of time in schools and logistic problems in conducting internship. Simulation is a form of experiential learning as well as to provide mentoring via Vygostky's (1978, as cited in McLeod, 2007) idea of scaffolding, for students in need of bridging what they know with what they do not know.

The study shows internship and business simulation is vital to be integrated into the Business Studies curriculum to ensure students learn business skills and future business community needs are met.

IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

The DRA approach used to build this curriculum made the stakeholders happy that their perspectives were taken into account. The stakeholders were able to have a bigger voice and were empowered in building the curriculum. DRA is a viable method to be used to develop a curriculum.

Secondly, the research proposed Futuristic Business Studies Curriculum model with business future needs and experiential learning provided a robust, reliable and valid framework to build a curriculum that is acceptable by all stakeholders of the Business Studies curriculum. This study adds to the academic field of having futuristic curriculum model. Taking into account the possible future scenario of the business world does assist in the production of a better fit curriculum with the needs of the future. The curriculum is looked upon by the stakeholders as being able to produce knowledgeable and skilled school leavers as demanded by the business sectors and institutions of higher learning when internship and business simulation are incorporated into the curriculum.

One major problem perceived by stakeholders in this study is the lack of time and practicality of carrying out internship by form six students. MEC, the body in charge of designing and developing the Business Studies must take into account the importance placed in incorporating internship and business simulation in the Business Studies curriculum.

As found by many studies, internship and business simulation are useful to increase the skill and knowledge of students and to prepare them for the business world. The findings of this study add to the body of literature the necessity to include internship and business simulation in business education in general and in Business Studies specifically.

The study of the curriculum of Business Studies shows academic and business fields are intertwined. This study has an impact on the business field's literature.

RECOMMENDATION & FURTHER WORK

There is a need to study the importance and method to incorporate internship and business simulation in a Business Studies curriculum without affecting the quality of education due to lack of time. There is a possibility that the present curriculum might consist of certain content that is irrelevant, thus could be excluded and make way for the incorporation of internship and business simulation. If internship is difficult to be incorporated in the school based curriculum, business simulation should be strongly considered. Köhler, Fischlmayr, Lainema, and Saarinen (2013) argue that students could and should learn team work skills using business simulation to ensure they would be able to put these skills into use when they start working. They would then become effective global team members in the international business community. Additionally, Piercy's (2013) study provides strong evidence that experiential learning in business education offer major benefits for teaching contemporary management practices such as cross-functional and team-based working.

Another matter to consider is perhaps the style of teaching and learning need to be changed to ensure the curriculum is presented in a more holistic manner. Using the problem based learning (PBL) could be considered as a method to teach many topics of business through the solving of actual business problems / scenarios. Students learned many business functions at once through solving business problems instead of learning business functions via topic by topic in a silo manner. Experiential learning can be conducted using PBL and studies could be conducted to see the viability and practicality of them in Business Studies in upper secondary schools.

Globalised and internationalized businesses are becoming a norm and to ensure growth in tandem with the business demands, new method of learning has to be weighed.

REFERENCES

Ahn, J.-H. (2008). Application of experiential learning cycle in learning with a business simulation game. Phd Columbia University.

Akker, Jan van den (2010). Curriculum design research. Paper presented at the An introduction to educational research design, East China Normal University, Shanghai (PR China).

Akker, Jan van den, Gravemeijier, K., McKenney, S., & Nieveen, N. (Eds.). (2006). Educational design research. Oxon: Routledge.

Akker, Jan van den, Gravemeijier, K., McKenney, S., & Nieveen, N. (2009). Introducing educational design research.

Baden, D. & Parkes, C. (2013) "Experiential learning: inspiring the business leaders of tomorrow", Journal of Management Development, 32(3), 295 – 308.

Bernama. (2010, February 28). Why graduates are unemployed, The Sunday Star, p. N14.
Bernama. (2012). Programme to assist jobless graduates by year end.

Budget 2013. (2012). A blueprint to help graduates secure employment, Retrieved from http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?sec=budget&file=/2012/9/29/budget/12099586

Brown, R. A. (2007). Curriculum consonance in technology education classrooms: The official, intended, implemented and experienced curriculum. PhD, University of Indiana.

Chapman, K., Loo, T. E., Kulasagaran, P., Mohsin, A., Goon, J., Ng, E., & Kaos Jr, J. (2012, September 12). Learning for 'real life', The Star.

CIA - The World Factbook. (2013). Country comparison: Unemployment rate. Retrieved 17 May 2013 from https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-worldfactbook/rankorder/2229rank.html?countryName=Malaysia&countryCode=my&regionCode=eas&rank=103#my

Creswell, J. W. (2008). Educational Research. Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Merill Prentice Hall.

Dow, J. L. (2002). The new vocationalism: A Deweyan analysis. (Phd Partial Fulfilment of PhD, University of Florida). Retrieved from http://etd.fcla.edu/UF/UFE0000525/dow_j.pdf

Dhesi, D., & Lee, K. S. (2011, January 15). Small businesses need big boost, The Star. Retrieved from http://biz.thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?sec=business&file=/2011/1/15/business/7774936

Egereonu, F. O. (2011). Business simulation: An exploration of the virtual enterprise program. (PhD partial, Columbia University).

Eisner, E. W. (1985). The educational imagination. On the design and evaluation of school programs (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Fischler, R. B. (2006). SIMTEACHER: Simulation-based learning in teacher education (PhD, Indiana University).

Foster, A. N. (2009). Gaming their way: Learning in simulation strategy video games? (PhD, Michigan State University).

Fullan, M., & Stiegelbauer, S. (1991). The new meaning of educational changes. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Garneau, P. & Brennan, R. (1999). "New relevance in marketing curriculum: Stakeholder perceptions of the effectiveness of Marketing Education". Proceeding of the Academy of Marketing Conference. McAuley, A. and Sparks, L. (eds). Stirling, Univeristy of Stirling.

Gee, J. P. (2007). What video games have to teach us about learning and literacy New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Harmer, B. (2009). Teaching in a contextual vacuum: lack of prior workplace knowledge as a barrier to sensemaking in the learning and teaching of business courses. Innovations in Education and Teaching International, 46(1).

Higgins, J. (2008). Career academies UK encourages youngsters to consider a career in the city. Director, 62(1), 23.

Hodges, D., & Burchell, N. (2003). Business graduate competencies: Employers' views on importance and performance. Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education.

Hoivik, H. (2009). Developing students' competence for ethical reflection while attending business school. Paper presented at the 21st Annual Conference of the European-Business-Ethics-Network, Antalya, Turkey.

Hull, D., & Grevelle, J. H. (1998). The next generation. Tech Prep.
Index Mundi. (2012). Country Comparison: Unemployment, youth ages 15-24. Retrieved 17 May, 2013 from http://www.indexmundi.com/g/r.aspx?c=my&v=2229

ILO. (2012). Youth employment. Retrieved 29 Nov, 2012, from http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/youth-employment/lang--en/index.htm

ILO. (2013). Global Employment Trends for Youth 2013. Retrieved 17 May, 2013, from http://ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/global-employment-trends/youth/2013/lang--en/index.htm

Johnson, L. A., & Helms, M. M. (2008). Keeping it local: Incorporating a local case study in the business curriculum. Education & Training, 50(4), 315-328.

Kelly, K. (1999). New rules for a new economy: 10 radical strategies for a connected world. New York, NY: Viking Press.

Köhler, T., Fischlmayr, I., Lainema, T., & Saarinen, E. (2013), Bringing the World into our Classrooms: The Benefits of Engaging Students in an International Business Simulation, in Charles Wankel, Patrick Blessinger (ed.)Increasing Student Engagement and Retention Using Classroom Technologies: Classroom Response Systems and Mediated Discourse Technologies (Cutting-edge Technologies in Higher Education), Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 6, 163-198.

Kolb, D. A., Boyatzis, R. E., & Mainemelis, C. (Eds.). (1999). Experiential Learning Theory: Previous Research and new direction. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Kovalik, C. L., & Kuo, C.-L. (2012). Innovation Diffusion: Learner benefits and instructor insights with the Diffusion Simulation Game. Simulation & Gaming, December (43), 802-824.

Lightfoot, J. M. (1999). Fads versus fundamentals: The dilemma for information systems curriculum design. Journal of Education for Business, September/October 1999, pp. 43-50.
Lucas, U., & Milford, P. (2003). Key aspects of teaching and learning in accounting, business, and management. In A Handbook for Teaching and Learning in Higher Malaysian Examination Council. (1998). Business Studies: Syllabus and sample questions: Percetakan Warni Sdn Bhd.

Mather, J. A., & Champagne, A. (2008). Student learning styles/strategies and professors' expectation. Do they match? College Quarterly, 11(2).

McLeod, S. A. (2007). Vygotsky. Retrieved from http://www.simplypsychology.org/vygotsky.html
Mintzberg, H. (2004). Managers not MBAs: A hard look at the soft practice of managing and management development. San Franscisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Narayanan, V. K., Olk, P. M., & Fukami, S. V. (2010). Determinants of Internship Effectiveness: An Exploratory Model. Academy of Management. Learning and Education, 9(1), 61-80.

Nieveen, N. (2007). Formative evaluation in educational design research. Paper presented at the Seminar on An Introduction to Educational Design Research, East China Normal University, Shanghai (PR China).

Nieveen, N., McKenney, S., & Akker, Jan van den. (2006). Educational design research: The value of variety. In J. Akker van den, K. Gravemeijer & S. McKenney (Eds.), Educational design research (pp. 151-158). London, UK: Routledge.

Paiseya, C., & Paisey, N. J. (2010). Developing skills via work placements in accounting: Student and employer views Accounting Forum. 34(2), 89-108.

Piercy, N. (2013). Evaluating experiential learning in the business context: Contributions to group-based and cross-functional working. Innovations in Education and Teaching International. 50(2), 202-213.
Podolny, J. (2009). The buck stops here (and starts) at business school. Harvard Business Review, 87(6), 62-67.

Popham, E., Schrag, A. F., & Blockhus, W. (1971). A teaching-learning system for business education. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Richey, R. C., Klein, J. D., & Nelson, W. (2004). Developmental research: Studies of instructional design and development. In D. H. Jonassen (Ed.), Handbook of research educational communications and technology. New York, NY: Macmillan Simon and Schuster. (pp. 1213-1240).

Rodriguez, C. M. (2009). The impact of academic self-concept, expectations and the choice of learning strategy on academic achievement: The case of business students. Higher Education Research & Development, 28(5).

Summers, G. J. (2004, June). Today's business simulation industry. Simulations and Business, 35, 208-241.

Talwar, R., & Hancock, T. (2010, January). The shape of jobs to come. Possible new careers emerging from advances in scientific and technology. Fast Future. Accelerating Innovation. (pp. 2010 – 2030).

Tapsir, S. H. (2013). Public policy in higher education and the influence on national economy. Paper presented at the Conference on International Higher Education, International University of Malaya Wales, Kuala Lumpur.

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (1998). Mixed methodology: Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

UK Commission of Employment and Skills. (2012). Business and schools: Building the world of work together. London: UK Commission of Employment and Skills Retrieved from http://www.ukces.org.uk/publications/business-and-schools-building-the-world-of-work-together.

Wong, K. L. (2008). Curriculum gaps in business education: Confrontation or collaboration? Paper presented at the National Management Conference 2008: A State of the Art Approach to Contemporary Business and Management, The Universiti Darul Iman Malaysia.

Wei Li. (2013). Development and application of transcripts in experiential and web-mediated ESP learning. International Journal of Engineering Research and Development. 6(5), 30-34.