

P.KHIDMAT MAKLUMAT AKADEMIK  
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**A SURVEY ON PURPOSES AND STRATEGIES USED BY TEACHERS IN  
CONDUCTING TUITION CLASSES IN UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN  
SERIAN DISTRICT**

By

**SENAN NJAU  
(11384)**

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## Abstract

### **A Survey on Purposes and Strategies used by teachers in conducting tuition classes in Upper Secondary schools in Serian District**

**Senan Njau**

This study focuses on the purposes and strategies used by teachers in conducting tuition classes in schools. It also focuses on the relevance and the problems faced by those directly involved in conducting these type of extended learning programs in their respective schools. Apart from that it looks into how tuition classes can help and enhance the understanding and learning among the students. It covers the needs and the application of strategies used during these classes and how they are able to maximize the utilization of approaches or methods and materials especially for the purpose of preparing students for the examinations. This study tries to find out how rural students who are relatively less exposed to the tuition classes like those in big towns and cities cope with their learning and responded to this kind of perspective and dimension in learning. Basically, the findings indicate that in most instances, the respondents were of the opinion that tuition classes really helped them in their learning although there were certain problems that they may encountered.

## Abstrak

### **Kajian Tentang Tujuan Dan Strategi yang digunakan oleh guru semasa mengadakan kelas tuisyen di Sekolah Menengah Atas di sekolah-sekolah dalam Daerah Serian.**

#### **Senan Njau**

Kajian ini berfokus kepada tujuan dan strategi yang digunakan oleh guru-guru semasa mengadakan kelas tuisyen di sekolah. Ia juga fokus kepada kesesuaian dan masalah-masalah yang dihadapi oleh pihak yang terlibat secara formal dan terperinci dalam pengendalian program di luar masa belajar di sekolah masing-masing. Selain daripada itu ia juga mengambilkira keberkesanan kelas tuisyen dalam memupuk serta menggalakkan pengetahuan dan pembelajaran dikalangan pelajar. Ia merangkumi keperluan dan penggunaan dalam mengaplikasikan strategi, teknik dan bahan kepada tahap yang maksimum terutama sekali dalam mempersiapkan pelajar-pelajar menghadapi ujian atau peperiksaan. Kajian ini bertujuan mengkaji pelajar-pelajar luar bandar yang mempunyai pendedahan yang kurang dalam kelas tuisyen seperti yang dialami oleh pelajar bandar atau kota dari segi pembelajaran. Secara amnya, pendedahan keputusan menyatakan bahawa kebanyakan pelajar atau responden berfikir bahawa kelas tuisyen yang diadakan memberi manfaat yang besar terhadap pembelajaran mereka walaupun terdapat masalah yang dihadapi semasa perlaksanaannya.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0 Introduction

In Malaysia, tuition means complementary educational lessons. Tuition can best be carried out as a means to assist in improving the academic achievement and performance of the students as a whole. It has a “vague” uniqueness because tuition has been thought to take place outside the school system. Its existence is solely reliant on the continuation of the schooling system in its current form. The emphasis on examination in Malaysian Education gives birth to and sustains individuals to opt for tuition classes. Teaching techniques are geared towards helping pupils to do well in the national exams. The slightest change in syllabus or exam formats will be met with the swiftest response in conducting tuition classes, often even capitalizing on the situation.

There are numerous means for teachers to enhance their teaching to assist their students' learning. Brown (2000) defined teaching as showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instructions, guiding in the study of something, providing knowledge, causing to know or understanding. One of the various approaches that teachers could choose to help their students in their studies is through providing guidance through tuition classes or extra classes. Tuition classes allow students' greater opportunities to revise and get better attention from their teacher

compared to the normal classroom scenarios. In addition, tuition classes provide opportunities for students to express themselves whenever they have problems in their studies. Thus, the need for tuition classes is born.

This chapter discusses the background of the study, statement of problems, research objectives and research questions, significance of the study and definitions of terms.

### **1.1 Background of the study**

The urge to be competitive in this globalize era propel individuals' intellectuality and competency. It is only to be expected for Malaysia to be involved in producing quality and productive citizens so as to compete in this globalize era. This is in line with Malaysia's vision to be a well-developed country by the year 2020. As such, the expectations to produce quality and productive citizens depends much on the Ministry of Education's (MOE) effort to come up with excellent performance and achievement of the students. Thus, the Ministry of Education has set up its vision and mission for every school to produce such excellence. With the set up of this vision and mission, schools are trying their best to search for ways and means to be parallel with the objectives of the Ministry of Education. As a result, related programs such as tuition classes are implemented and conducted in schools to meet the objectives and demands as well as assisting the students from low income group.

Furthermore, it has been found in a wide variety of studies that various programs models were linked to after-school program participation which improved attitudes toward school, higher expectations of school achievement, better work habits and higher attendance rates, especially for students from low income group (Brookes, Mojica, & Land, 1995).

Therefore, it is vital to look into how teachers conducted tuition classes in schools with reference to the teaching styles they employed, the activities chosen and the materials used. The findings of this study will help educationist to understand the importance of tuition classes as a means to produce quality and productive citizens.

For the purpose of this study, the focus is on Upper Secondary School students consisting of Form 4 and Form 5 students. Upper secondary School refers to those studying in Form 4 until Form 6. However, in this study, the respondents of the research would be only Form 4 and Form 5 students.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

“Tuition” in Malaysia refers to extra classes taken after school for various subjects, usually those tested in major national exams. This can vary from one-to-one tutoring to actual tuition schools. Often, instead of going over the material thoroughly in class,

things get taught very quickly and the students are told to attend extra tuition after school for more information. Sometimes students are put down for not attending tuition classes.

Moreover, this competitive world has caused individuals to become very obsessed with the idea of obtaining the best results. Consequently, schools are longer considered as an institution to gain knowledge but as a tool to obtain the best results. It no longer matters if individuals do not really comprehend the basics of thermodynamics because it is never completely explained in class, or do not possess the ability to appreciate the philosophy of Socrates and Plato because there is no school or class that teaches it. The most important thing is to score the best results.

The necessity to deal with the ever-increasing expectation and better academic performance of each individual has resulted in the need to find means and alternatives to improve students' performance in public examinations. This has resulted in the rapidly increasing of various types of after-school programs such as tuition classes that aims at providing sufficient learning guidance for the students before facing their examinations.

Selection of materials and appropriateness of techniques as well as the suitability of the activities chosen for conducting tuition classes is significant. The ability to verify will consequently contributes to the students' interest and motivation towards certain subject or topics taught. Hence, this will enable the smoothness of the teaching and learning to takes place. Apart from that, by conducting tuition classes in this manner

it is believed that it will reinforce the students' better understanding of the lessons.

Most schools implement these tuition classes in the afternoon and weekends. Normally the classes start at 3.00 p.m. and end at 4.30 p.m. For the weekend classes, the normal time is from 9.00 until 11.00 in the morning. These classes are conducted in any suitable venues that have been determined by the school authority. The teachers involve are normally rotated to teach the main subjects only. For example, for English, four or five teachers would be involved and in a week, each would have one session with that particular class.

In most schools, conducting of tuition classes for the students is one of the most popular options. This program is mainly aimed at providing the much-needed learning guidance for the students especially as an effort to curb slow learners and low performance. Therefore, it is important to find out how teachers carry out tuition classes in schools based on their teaching styles, materials used and the activities that they provide to the students. This would help to improve its implementation and overcome problems faced in schools.

Based on the statement of problem, this study undertakes to carry out a study to find out how teachers conduct tuition classes in schools based on the materials, activities and styles employed.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

This study aims to find out:

1.3.1 the purpose of carrying out tuition classes

1.3.2 materials or resources used by teachers when conducting tuition classes

1.3.3 how teachers carry out tuition classes

### **1.4 Research Questions**

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

1.4.1 What are the purposes for carrying out tuition classes?

1.4.2 What are the resources/materials used during English language tuition classes?

1.4.3 What are the teaching styles employed during tuition classes?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study undertakes to seek information about tuition classes for English Language in schools. The information gathered may prove useful to teachers in practising an alternative teaching strategy for the betterment of the students. The aspects focuses in this study are the purpose for its implementation, the materials used and the teaching styles advocated when conducting tuition classes.

The samples for this study are Form Four and Form Five students from two secondary schools in Serian district. The rationale for choosing the Form Four and Form Five

classes for this particular study is due to the fact that these students are those who are normally chosen by the school authority to undergo or involved in these types of extended learning programs. In most schools, the Form Four classes are given tuition classes as a way to prepare the students for their examination the next year whereas the Form Five students are required to attend tuition classes to reinforce the knowledge acquired in the normal class. Normally, there will be two groups of students selected for such program. One is the group of students who are at the border line and needs remedial classes to ensure passing marks in the national exam. Another is the group that is expected to score excellent results. In most instances, these classes are normally reinforcement classes whereby the target is for quality results.

Both remedial and reinforcement classes is a must to ensure the success of the vision and mission set up by the ministry. Woolfolk (2004) explained that an excellent teacher is not the ability to apply techniques but the artistry of being reflective, thoughtful and inventive. This was proven by the study done by Viviana as cited in Woolfolk (2004) on 25 students from Nicaragua, Mexico. He also mentioned that, teaching is so complex that it must be invented anew with every new subject and class. Good teachers always guide by learners' sides, dividing the teaching materials into smaller segments, teaching each segments clearly and reinforcing or correcting, thus transmitting accurate understandings from teacher to student.

Therefore, this information is important as this can be beneficial or as guidance for other teachers or schools in order to guide and support learning. In addition, the Ministry of Education(MOE) may be able to initiate more support in terms of improving the materials, incentives or providing various training skills such as in-house training, talks, courses where teachers are exposed to different techniques, how to manipulate materials or resources and verify their teaching styles for the tuition classes.

## **1.6 Definitions of Terms**

### **1.6.1 Tuition Classes**

Tuition class is defined as additional learning programs which is given or conducted outside the formal classroom learning situation. In this study, “tuition classes” refers to the classes provided or conducted by teachers outside the usual teaching and learning timeframe. The tuition classes may be schedule in the afternoon, night or even weekends. There have been unsubstantiated claims that in some cases the classes have been “organized” in some schools as a means to supplement students’ learning.

### **1.6.2 Teaching styles**

Long (1990) explains that methodology or teaching styles is the instructional

strategies and learning processes employed by both teachers and learners in performing tasks which they engage in independently, in groups or as a whole class.

In this study the teaching styles refers to the approaches or methods used by teachers when conducting English tuition classes.

### **1.6.3 Materials or resources**

Materials or resources refer to the things that the teachers used when conducting tuition classes. These may include things like printed materials, CDs, internet websites, audio-visual aids and even newspapers which may be useful when conducting these classes. Printed articles or any forms of authentic or related materials are used in the process of teaching and learning which can be developed to enhance the learning process. In this study, the resources are the materials chosen or used by teachers when conducting tuition classes that can be adopted or adapted to suit the level of the students' ability and their lessons objectives.

### **1.6.4 Activities**

Activities refer to the activities or ways of conducting the lesson during the

process of teaching and learning such as peers, pairs, groups, individual or as a whole class to impart knowledge to the students.

In this study, activities are carried out during tuition classes to meet the objectives of the lesson. These activities will facilitate students to understand content of the lesson and to apply what has been taught.

### **1.6.5 Achievement**

Steinberger (1993) defines achievement as excellence and capacity of a student's work. It encompasses students' aptitude and performance, intricately linked to individual development and cognitive, emotional, social and physical progress. It is not related to a distinct case, but occurs across time and levels, through students' life in public school and on into post secondary years and working life. Thus, in this study the quality of students' work is to be analyzed based on their performance in school-based assessment

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter aims to look into the tuition's role towards Education, strategies used in tuition classes, tuition as Remedial, tuition as Reinforcement, reasons for conducting tuition Classes, Problems faced in conducting tuition classes, benefits of tuition classes and a summary. These are essential as a foundation to support the conduction of tuition classes employed by teachers in Malaysian secondary schools to match the demand for better results and academic performance of the students.

#### **2.1 Tuition's role towards Education**

The Ministry of Education aims at producing a well balanced and productive citizens to ensure that Malaysia achieve its goal to be a well-developed country by the year 2020. It is with this goal in mind that tuition classes are implemented in schools. It cannot be denied that tuition classes do play a role in the education system.

Hackman & Sanger (2001), in their article discussed how in Los Angeles's Better Educated Students for Tomorrow (LA's BEST) beyond the school programs can play important role in helping students not only in their studies but also in co-curricular activities. They insisted that after-school programs documented academic achievement through drills and meaningful activities.

Besides, they found that proponents of after-school programs argued that students would learn more academic skills and learn better if they spent more time on these skills and tasks outside their regular school hours.

In LA's BEST, students spend from 3.00 p.m. until 6.00 p.m. in activities where staff members implemented three important learning principles on the program. These principles include providing learning guidance based on what the students already know, help students value their own ideas and experiences and following students' interests when planning the activities. Huang, Gibbons, Kim, Lee, & Baker (2000), in their recent 10-year longitudinal study, found that students' participation in LA's BEST improved school attendance, attitudes and engagement in school achievement.

Besides, their study showed that students participated more actively in school life and demonstrated positive changes in their behavior and reported enjoying the after-school program. It can be seen from the study conducted on LA's

BEST. The findings indicated that learning beyond the classroom if conducted systematically and with the right attitudes and support from every quarter involved would bring positive results. The result of the longitudinal studies showed that besides the improvement in attendance, attitudes, and participation in school activities, the programs was able to improve the academic achievement of the students.

This also indirectly implies that if extra classes in the Malaysian educational settings are properly managed and implemented, it would be able to inculcate positive attitudes among the students besides providing the learning guidance for them in order to improve their academic achievement. However, as the findings of the study in LA's BEST showed, the effectiveness of such programs required the support and sacrifices from those involved in their implementation.

Wilcox (1997), in his article discussed about the nature of school improvement being carried out in most secondary schools. He gave an overview of how schools nowadays, being under greater pressure to produce better results have been doing what they could to achieve that goal with various strategies and approaches. He further pointed out that school improvement programs were carried out and run by the respective schools without much influence from

external factors. Therefore their effectiveness would depend highly on their organization and practices.

The discussion put forward by Wilcox showed that school improvement through various strategies and methods depend on the school management because they were the one who would have to provide the necessary manpower and materials. This is basically true with the conducting of extra classes in the Malaysian schools since extra classes are conducted mainly through the initiatives of the respective schools without the influence of outside factors and therefore the school management is accountable for their effectiveness.

Weinstein, Madison, and Kuklinski (1995) view that over time , as they shared in an evolving collaborative effort to raise expectations for low-achieving high school students and suggest that expectancy-change models must move beyond the student-teacher dyad to include the organization of schooling-colleague relationships, norms, policies, and practices that keep low expectations in place.

This study is related to the focus of this particular study because those involve in the implementation of extra classes are bound to face problems with work overload and additional effort needed to conduct the extra classes in school. It

is therefore important that before implementing such programmes, the school authority should take into consideration various factors that might hinder and affect those involved in conducting them.

It is fundamental that those directly involved would not face too much problems and pressure so that the programs could be carried out smoothly as planned. The systematic management and organization of any programs would determine their effectiveness and thus beneficial to those involved in implementing them.

Wesley Bennet (2005) stated that in Jamaica Extra classes or tuition classes have been a fixture in the education system of the country for as long as they care to recall. They pre-date all our existing educational programs and examinations. Yet more recently the justification and reasons for the maintenance of these classes have been called into question. However, there were unsubstantiated claims that in some cases the classes have been "organized" in some schools as a means to supplement some teachers' emoluments. The charge has been made too that some teachers "hold back" in their teaching duties during regular school hours in order to justify the need for extra classes.

Around the world, extra classes are a phenomenon. Individuals request them

and many governments and educational jurisdictions embrace them. In countries like Japan and South Korea, extra classes proliferate (Bennet, 2005). Saturday classes are a routine and parents insist on their children attending them. In several states of the USA, the classes are organized on Saturdays and during school holidays and are paid for by the local authorities (Bennet, 2005). In Jamaica, tuition classes are now mushrooming at all levels including tertiary. And issues of quality control and standards have now become key issues and require some attention.

The issue of extra classes is an educational, economic and social one. This is because all children do not learn at the same rate and have different amounts of experience, some, particularly slow ones, need extra learning time to master learning content and gain further experience as they work towards achieving their full potential. Extra classes provide a means towards this end.

But many people want and demand extra classes for other reasons. They demand them because they think that the classes will provide a competitive edge particularly the examinations, which would lead to awards such as scholarships and others.

Individuals will demand and allocate financial resources to extra classes with the prospect for greater returns in the future on their investments. The economic principle of demand and supply is brought to bear.

As in every teaching and learning methods, there are positive as well as negative aspects of such classes on individual. By conducting tuition classes, students acquired the opportunities to relate socially and to share more experiences with classmates. This usually arises from more leisurely conducted classes. Many more friendships are fostered than constrained in many extra classes. Wider public social is there as well, particularly when the classes incorporate approaches that require the students to share and support their peers thus indirectly inculcating good values.

Implicit in the reflections above, is the acknowledgement of the inevitability of extra classes but more so the need for a thoughtful response in which we should examined critically on how to improve the quality and standard of these classes.

Undoubtedly, many people are also questioning and making endless unwarranted claims about the effectiveness of these classes and they fail to acknowledge that often those students who are involved in tuition are bound to succeed anyway. They claimed that some of these "after-school" classes focus on recall of facts instead of understanding important concepts and improving skills. Some of the classes are very unorganized and implemented just to please certain quarters thus depriving the students of what they should get