Challenges Faced By Primary School Teachers in Implementing Classroom Assesment (PBD)

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ABSTRACT

This independent study discusses the challenges faced by teachers and improvement steps in implementing Classroom Assessment (PBD) in primary schools. PBD was introduced by the Ministry of Education (KPM) to replace the Primary School Achievement Test (UPSR) because PBD is an ongoing process in the teaching and learning (PdP) session to obtain information about students' development, progress, abilities, and mastery of the desired curriculum goals. This independent study outlines six challenges: excessive workload, time constraints, prioritizing TP reporting over student development, low effectiveness of PBD training or workshops, lack of monitoring by administrators, involvement of non-option teachers, and finally, the socio-economic factors of the school. Improvement steps to ensure effective assessment implementation, including practical course and workshop implementation, reducing the documentation process burden, providing professional support, and monitoring and granting autonomy to teachers. It is hoped that this independent study can provide useful guidance to teachers in conducting effective classroom assessments and contribute to improving the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom.

Keywords - Classroom Assessment, challenges, improvement steps

INTRODUCTION

Examinations have become an important tradition among the people of our country. Every year, teachers work tirelessly to prepare students for the major exam in Year 6, the Ujian Pencapaian Sekolah Rendah (UPSR). The UPSR has been the largest public examination at the primary school level since 1988. This examination has replaced the Peperiksaan Penilaian Darjah Lima (PPDL) that was previously administered. UPSR was introduced to assess the 4Ms: reading, writing, counting, and reasoning.

However, one thing has sparked various reactions among parents is the demise of the UPSR in 2021. To replace this examination system, Datuk Dr. Mohd Radzi Md Jidin introduced Classroom Assessment (PBD) (Arumugham, 2020). Although there is demand from parents, the latest Minister of Education, YB Puan Fadhlina binti Sidek, stated that the UPSR will not be reestablished. She also emphasized that student achievement can be accurately assessed thru PBD. This is also in line with the fact that the assessment approach is very suitable for practice with students today because each student has different talents and abilities (Yates & Johnston, 2018).

Classroom Assessment, or PBD for short, is a combination of two words: Assessment and Classroom. Assessment is more commonly known as the process of evaluating and measuring something, such as a person's skills, abilities, or achievements. Students are assessed thru various methods such as tests, assignments, projects, and continuous assessment. Classroom, on the other hand, refers to the room or place where the teaching and learning process takes place in a school. It is also a place where various subjects are taught and diverse learning activities take place. Generally, PBD is an ongoing process in the teaching and learning session to obtain information about students' development, progress, abilities, and mastery of the desired curriculum goals.

PBD was introduced thru the Primary School Standard Curriculum (KSSR) in 2011. PBD mastery level in each subject. This mastery level is stated in the Performance Standards as found in the Curriculum and Assessment Standard Document (DSKP) and all subjects under the National Preschool Standard Curriculum (KSPK), KSSR, Transition Class Standard Curriculum (KSPK), and Secondary School Standard Curriculum (KSSM). Performance Standards, Content Standards, and Learning Standards are also referenced in the implementation of PBD.

Problem Statement

Currently, PBD serves as the main foundation for the School-Based Assessment (PBS) approach, which emphasizes holistic evaluation and promotes meaningful learning. PBD is not just an assessment instrument, but a formative and summative assessment system that encourages teachers to determine students' mastery level and potential holistically, including cognitive, psychomotor, and affective aspects.

PBD has been developed and has become an important core in assessing students' progress throughout the year. However, PBD still faces various challenges despite the assessment being implemented for several years. Among the challenges are the heavy workload of teachers, lack of confidence and understanding of PBD, time constraints for implementing PBD continuously, lack of understanding among teachers regarding students' mastery levels, and confusion in reporting evidence of student learning. As evidence, according to Khalil and Awang (2016) in a journal titled 'Issues of Teacher Readiness in Implementing School-Based Assessment Practices', teachers were found to be less confident in assessing students, even tho they had attended courses related to assessment. This makes the assessment process run smoothly.

The challenges stated by the researcher above are among the reasons why this study needs to be conducted. This is because PBD is a very important approach for the current era of education. The students' mastery level for each subject will be assessed thru this PBD process. Despite various challenges, teachers are the individuals who need to overcome them to maintain the effectiveness of PBD maintains all the concepts of School-Based Assessment and involves determining students' implementation. Therefore, the researcher conducted this study to identify the challenges still faced by primary school teachers in implementing PBD. Researchers also hope that the study's findings will ultimately identify the real challenges and improve the effectiveness of PBD implementation in every primary school.

Study Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

1. Identify the challenges faced by teachers in implementing PBD.
2. Suggest improvement steps taken to overcome challenges in implementing PBD.

Research Questions

The research question for this study is:

1. What are the challenges faced by primary school teachers in implementing PBD?
2. What are the suggested enhancement steps to address the issues and challenges in implementing PBD?

Challenges Faced By Teachers In Implementing Pbd

Teacher Workload

According to Yeh (2021), the commonly discussed challenge in implementing PBD is the excessive increase in teachers' workload. The study's findings revealed that "the workload on teachers increased significantly due to the preparation of appropriate instruments during the assessment process."

This is because teachers not only conduct teaching and learning, but they also need to prepare assessment instruments to evaluate each student based on their different levels of mastery. If the student does not achieve

the mastery level, the teacher needs to plan and prepare follow-up assessment instruments, but they also need to create a portfolio for each student containing complete personal information and samples of their work. Teachers also need to prepare before, during, and after teaching and learning to achieve the objectives for each syllabus. Additionally, teachers also need to upload student data regarding their PBD proficiency levels into systems like IdMe. To complete all this work, teachers need a lot of time, and they even need deep skills and understanding in implementing PBD.

This situation is more challenging for non-option teachers, who teach subjects outside their area of specialization. They need to understand the content of subjects outside their field, as well as plan and prepare assessment materials and instruments for more than one subject. This is what causes them to face the challenge of time constraints as well, because they are forced to spend more time outside of teaching hours, such as preparing teaching and learning materials suitable for students with different levels of mastery. This will become a burden, affecting their physical and mental health and reducing their enthusiasm for effective PBD implementation.

Additionally, there is a study titled 'Evaluation of the Implementation Level of Classroom Assessment Among Teachers of Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Tebobon Kota Kinabalu Sabah' which aligns with the above challenges. In this study, it is stated that "Among the frequently reported problems are student absenteeism, large class sizes, and time constraints that limit teachers from conducting detailed assessments" (Amatan, Raimin, Paidal & Majid, 2024). In this study, the researchers also stated that teachers experience a heavy workload because in addition to managing the implementation of PBD, they also have to hold administrative positions. Additional workloads like this impact the implementation of PBD because they are unable to divide their time to carry out administrative and assessment tasks.

Time Constraints

Next, the study titled 'Classroom Assessment Methods and Their Impact on Year One Students: An Analysis of Islamic Education Subjects' by Mustaqim (2024) found that time constraints actions for the student to reach the set mastery level. In PBD, teachers not only prepare

during the classroom assessment period were a negative impact faced when the classroom assesment process was carried out. Researchers state that "The time constraints for conducting this PBD process are also due to three fundamental factors: the excessive number of students, the greater focus on weaker students, and student absenteeism, which hinders the PBD process."

In implementing PBD, teachers usually face the main challenge of time constraints. The period for completing PBD for students is throughout the year, depending on the teaching and learning plans of each subject teacher. Based on the above study, the issue of time constraints is caused by three factors: too many students, prioritizing weaker students, and absences from school. First of all, usually every school has 30 to 40 students in one class, except for Schools with Fewer Students (SKM). Teachers need to teach, assess, and evaluate the level of mastery of students in the classes they teach within the time specified in the schedule. Each class has three levels of student achievement: weak, average, and excellent. Teachers need to prepare different assessment instruments according to students' levels and administer them in every class. This process takes a long time, but teachers need to divide their attention among all students within the allotted teaching time, even if time is insufficient.

The second factor is that teachers prioritize weaker students in PBD assessments. Teachers pay more attention to weaker students because they need more encouragement. Teachers also prioritize weaker students over other students so they don't fall behind in their learning. Although focusing on weaker students is important, teachers also need to ensure that more advanced students are not neglected. It takes a long time for teachers to continuously assess other students. Finally, it reflects the injustice in the PBD assessment, which makes the PBD evaluation less valid.

The third factor is absence from school, which leads to time constraints for teachers. When a student is absent from school, teachers are unable to carry out the PBD process for that student. The teachers were forced to

postpone the PBD process timeframe. Teachers are also not allowed to assess and assign TP1 to students who are absent from school. This is because bright students may not be able to attend school due to health problems, and if they are assessed at TP1, it would be unfair to evaluate their PBD.

Emphasis on Reporting TP Compared to Student Development

According to Arumugham (2020) in a study titled 'Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment from the Perspective of Classroom Assessment Implementation', it is stated that "the greater focus on TP causes teachers to pay less attention to the process of students' learning development". The teacher placed excessive emphasis on TP instead

of focusing on the students' development in terms of communication, creative and critical thinking, and their learning abilities. Teachers are paying too much attention to filling in the TP as proof of conducting assessments. However, they failed to prioritize student development.

Teachers are forced to manage their time and teaching methods to align with the requirements of TP documentation and reporting. Attention to TP reporting will cause workload and pressure, which in turn will affect teachers' creativity in applying student-centered learning approaches. If this continues, it contradicts the goals of PBD being introduced, and PBD will only be seen as a TP reporting tool and not a process for student development in all aspects of learning.

PBD Courses & Training Ineffective

Next, according to Suppian, Ghazali, Isa & Govindasamy (2020) in a study titled 'Self-Assessment of Student Teachers on the Level of Classroom Assessment Skills (PBD)', it was stated that "teachers participating in PBD training programs that had little impact on them resulted in PBD activities being poorly implemented". These findings are consistent with the results of a study titled 'Challenges Faced by Visual Arts Education with Classroom Assessment in Hilir Perak District Primary Schools'. According to Yeh (2021), "The study results from interviews indicate that 50% of teachers who attended the course felt they were still not well-prepared to implement PBD in for the student to a later date. This postpones the tasks that need to be completed within that schools, even after attending training courses conducted at the PPD level or thru in-house training."

The effectiveness of the training provided to teachers on the implementation of PBD is a challenge discussed in both of the above studies. According to Gurganious (2017), in the process of implementing PBD, teachers are responsible for planning and constructing assessment instruments, conducting assessments, recording assessment results, analyzing assessment information, and taking follow-up actions based on the analysis of assessment information. Therefore, the PPD needs to conduct various courses and workshops related to PBD from time to time. Although teachers attended courses and workshops organized by the District Education Office, it had no impact on the practical implementation of PBD. This is because the training given to teachers is too theoretical without emphasizing the real-world implementation of PBD in the classroom. Many teachers do not feel confident in implementing assessments as stated in PBD, which is to continuously evaluate students' learning evidence, align assessments with teaching, and use a holistic assessment approach.

Lack of Monitoring & Guidance from Administrators

Yeh (2021) also stated in his study that "the lack of administrative monitoring in aspects of planning, evidence or work collection, score recording, and documentation are factors contributing to inconsistent PBD implementation, as well as the presence of a casual attitude toward the assessment process and a lack of importance placed on PBD implementation." The challenge reflected in the above study is the lack of monitoring by school administrators during the implementation of PBD in primary schools. School administrators need to play a proactive role in supporting teachers thru mentoring, monitoring, coordination, and validation. Teachers face confusion in planning, collecting evidence, recording TP, and preparing PBD documents without continuous monitoring by school administrators. Teachers are still unclear about assessment methods and require continuous teachers do not receive accurate guidance and feedback, which makes them weak in effectively implementing PBD. This will also lead to a casual attitude among teachers and implementing PBD merely to provide evidence rather than improve students' learning mastery.

Teachers Not an Option (Less Skilled in the Subject)

In addition, Yeh (2021) also outlined the challenges faced by non-option teachers in their study, stating that "The study results show that most teachers who conduct PSV PBD are non-PSV option teachers and they do not have in-depth knowledge of PBD for the PSV subject." As stated in the study above, readers can learn about the challenge that the implementation of PBD in the Visual Arts (PSV) subject is seen as less effective due to a lack of exposure to the concepts and implementation of PBD PSV among non-PSV option teachers. This is because teachers who are not PSV option teachers usually have no background, knowledge, or skills in the field. They were given responsibilities without any exposure to PBD. The teacher is not an option and doesn't understand PBD at all, asking teachers from other schools for information.

A lack of in-depth knowledge or skills in a particular subject will cause non-option teachers to have a poor understanding of the PBD approach and how to assess students' mastery levels. They will implement PBD superficially because they don't understand the process of implementing PBD in subjects they are less proficient in. This raises concerns about the implementation of PBD by non-option teachers because ultimately their assessment of students' achievements in PBD is inaccurate and unfair. Teachers' level of knowledge and skills plays an important role in the effective implementation of PBD (Faudzi & Ahmad, 2022).

Socio-economic Factors of the School

Finally, a study titled 'Supporting Teachers to Develop Formative Assessment Knowledge and Skills Inno-fee Schools. The South African Journal of Childhood Education by Ramollo and Kanjee (2023) discusses the challenges faced by teachers monitoring and guidance to implement PBD effectively (Arumugham, 2020). This is because in implementing PBD in South Africa. "This study in South Africa found that although teachers involved in the Learning Assessment Capacity Development Program showed significant improvement in their knowledge and understanding of formative assessment, challenging socio-economic contexts continued to be a major barrier to its implementation" (Ramollo & Kanjee, 2023).

In this study, there are several socio-economic factors that pose challenges for teachers in implementing formative assessment. First of all, the school faces issues of resource and physical material shortages, such as teaching materials and basic facilities like suitable classrooms and technological equipment. This makes it difficult for teachers to continue effective formative assessment. The second factor is the students' background. Most of the students who study at that school come from families with low socioeconomic backgrounds. This hinders their ability to actively participate in the teaching and learning process and formative assessment. The final factor is teacher qualifications. Teachers working in this tuition-free school have lower teaching qualifications and no exposure to specialized training. This has a negative impact on the implementation of formative assessment. Teachers at that school will face difficulties in continuing formative assessment without ongoing professional development.

The above-mentioned previous studies are about studies that comprehensively examine the implementation of PBD and the challenges faced by teachers in implementing PBD, both domestically and internationally.

Improvement Steps

Conducting Practical Courses and Workshops

The first improvement step for teachers facing challenges in implementing PBD is to conduct more practical training or workshops. Superiors need to redesign training or workshops related to the implementation of PBD in a more practical and realistic way. Training and workshops should be implementing PBD. This is because they are the ones who effectively plan and implement PBD in every classroom. Therefore, it is important for the Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM) and District Education Offices (PPD) to conduct training or workshops based on the actual needs and requirements of teachers in the classroom.

According to Suppian et al. (2020) and Yeh (2021), although teachers participated in training, workshops, or in-house training conducted by the PPD, they were still hesitant and lacked confidence in implementing PBD. This reflects that the training and workshops conducted did not achieve their objectives because teachers' understanding of preparing instruments, assessing students' mastery levels, and implementing follow-up

actions is still low. Therefore, training needs to be provided in phases based on the teachers' level of mastery and the actual situation of PBD practice in the classroom. PBD modules also need to be prepared for each subject to make it easier for teachers, especially non-option teachers who teach subjects outside their specialization. In conclusion, the implementation of more practical exercises and workshops can increase confidence levels in implementing PBD in the classroom.

Reducing Documentation Burden

The next improvement step is to reduce the documentation burden in the implementation of PBD. Time constraints and workload begin with documentation work. Beside conducting teaching and learning in the classroom, teachers worked tirelessly on preparing documentation, especially that related to PBD (Performance-Based Assessment). A lot of time is required for teachers to record student TP, organize evidence, and upload student data into the digital system. This puts pressure on teachers because they have to spend a lot of time on documentation reporting instead of focusing on actual teaching and learning. According to Arumugham (2020), teachers neglect students' actual development and the effectiveness of PBD because they place more emphasis on documenting students' TP reporting. This makes it difficult for teachers to meet the needs of each student who has a different level of proficiency. designed based on the results of interviews or surveys from teachers facing challenges in Therefore, responsible parties such as the Ministry of Education need to modify the PBD reporting method, which is burdensome for teachers. The PBD reporting method needs to be more practical and not burdensome for teachers. A PBD reporting system that is moving toward digital and is more flexible can reduce the documentation burden in implementing PBD. For example, the IDME system can be improved for minimum filling to monitor student progress from time to time. Additionally, teachers need to be mindful that the effectiveness of PBD does not depend on the number of documented reports, but on continuous guidance provided to students to help them achieve their mastery level. This truth emphasizes that the primary role of a teacher is to implement active and reflective learning as a facilitator.

Increased Professional Support and Monitoring

The third improvement step to overcome the challenges faced by teachers in implementing PBD is that professional support and monitoring need to be increased. Professional support and monitoring from administrators and superiors such as SISC+ officers from the PPD are important to ensure the effectiveness of PBD implementation in every school. Teachers are still confused about preparing PBD instruments, implementing PBD, assessing students' TP, and taking follow-up actions. Teachers who are not proficient also face difficulties in implementing PBD for subjects they are not or are less skilled in. According to Yeh (2021), the lack of monitoring and guidance from administrators led to the careless implementation of PBD among teachers. Without guidance and monitoring from superiors, teachers will implement PBD inconsistently. They will implement PBD as mere documentation, not to guide students to achieve their mastery level. Teachers also don't get the opportunity to reflect on and improve their weaknesses.

Therefore, school administrators need to spend their time monitoring and subsequently guiding their school teachers in implementing PBD. The committee chairman or PBD coordinator can also guide teachers in the implementation and reporting of PBD. They can also share the problems they

Experienced teachers can also guide new teachers in terms of assessment planning, implementation, and reflection. SISC+ officers also frequently visit schools under their guidance to ensure the smooth implementation of PBD. They need to guide teachers face-to-face to understand the real situation of PBD practices. Thru this, they can also plan interventions to address the problems they face in implementing PBD. This will reflect the true situation or reality of PBD implementation in each classroom.

Giving Teachers More Autonomy

The final improvement step is that teachers need to be given autonomy in implementing PBD. Teachers need to be given autonomy, or more simply put, freedom to assess students based on their actual classroom situations. Many teachers are given the same format or method of implementation without considering the subject, the

level of students in the class, or the teacher's abilities. In this situation, teachers are not given autonomy to adapt the assessment methods according to their classes. Teachers should fill out the TP form in the same way. This method is called 'one size fits all'. The term 'one size fits all' is problematic and restricts teachers' freedom in how they assess students. This situation makes teachers lose interest in implementing PBD because they are not given their autonomy.

Therefore, teachers need to be given autonomy, which is the freedom to assess the proficiency level of their students in their classes. This is because no one understands their students as deeply as their subject teachers. Teachers need to be given the freedom to choose how or what methods to assess, evaluate students' mastery levels, and document PBD reporting based on the real-life situations of their PBD practices. These improvement steps can encourage teachers to overcome the challenges they face in implementing PBD and subsequently increase the effectiveness of PBD in every classroom.

CONCLUSION

Classroom Assessment (PBD) is a formative assessment strategy that takes place continuously in teaching and learning in every classroom. face and improvement steps to enhance the effectiveness of PBD in their classrooms.

Although PBD has been introduced and implemented for several years, its implementation still poses various challenges for teachers. In conclusion, this study was conducted to identify the challenges faced by primary school students in implementing PBD. Among the challenges are excessive workload, time constraints, prioritizing TP reporting over student development, low effectiveness of PBD training or workshops, lack of monitoring by administrators, involvement of non-option teachers, and finally, the socio-economic factors of the school. The challenges faced by teachers will affect the effectiveness of PBD implementation and put pressure on teachers physically, emotionally, and motivationally.

In line with this, there are several improvement steps that can address the challenges faced by teachers in implementing PBD. These include the practical implementation of courses and workshops, reducing the documentation process burden, providing professional support and monitoring, and granting autonomy to teachers. These improvement steps should be practiced by teachers to increase their self-confidence and implement PBD with full motivation and effectiveness. However, sustained efforts must be undertaken by senior management to ensure that PBD is implemented according to the wishes and desires of the Ministry of Education (KPM) and thus promote fair and holistic student learning.

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