

Measuring Gender Equality in Technical and Vocational Education and Training

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Abstract – *This study was performed to measure the gender equality involvement in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Program in one of the Malaysia Technical University Network (MTUN). The focuses of this study are general perspective in gender equality, men and women position in society, and sources of information about TVET. 200 respondents involving students and lecturers from various field of TVET programs involved in this study. Questionnaire was applied to gather the data information and descriptive analysis represent the findings. Result showed that most respondents strongly agree with men helping in the household were women, they are also aware about the national policies on gender equality in Malaysia, and for last section of survey, respondents agree that they choose studying in TVET program because the better job opportunities. In summary, there is no gender issue in Malaysia's policy, position of work and opportunities in further education especially in TVET programs. **Copyright** © 2015 Penerbit Akademia Baru - All rights reserved.*

Keywords: Gender equality, TVET, Gender perspective

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Gender equity denotes women having the same opportunities in life as men, including ability to participate in the public share [1]. Gender equality in general context is the difference between women and men in the same household and between cultures in which a social and cultural change in form through time. These differences will impact the roles, responsibilities, outreach and access to resources, wealth of opportunities, needs and perceptions of others that are held by women and men. Hence, gender is not something synonymous with women but a consideration of both male and female between interconnected dependencies. Since independence in 1957, Malaysia has made remarkable progress in poverty reduction and human development. The Government of Malaysia recognizes the important in gender equality in contributing to the development of the nation. The commitment of the government to achieve gender equality is reflected in the formulation and adoption of policies and measures taken to promote women's development and address gender issues. Gender equality, equity and the empowerment of women are fundamental to human development.

2.0 ENGAGING GENDER EQUALITY

United Nation Children Fund, UNICEF [2], explained the critical to lasting social change in gender-equality efforts for several reasons. Gender is about the relationship between and

among women and men, girls and boys; transforming relationship to involve all these group of people, because gender norms are created and perpetuated from birth on ward by families, communities, schools and other institutions, it is key to work with men in order to change the way girls and boy experience childhood.

Women's economic empowerment is an important aspect of this strategy in gender equality and government policy practices. International Center for Research on Women [3], stated two components to women's economic empowerment; a woman is economically empowered when she has both the ability to succeed and advance economically and the power to make an act on economic decision. It concluded; to succeed and advance economically, women need the skills and resources to compete in markets as well as fair and equal access to economic institutions and to have power and agency to benefit from economics activities, women need to have the ability to make and act on decisions and control resources and profits.

Equality is premised on the fact that women, like men are persons to be accorded their inalienable indivisible and inherent human rights. Human rights demand that women and men who are alike be treated equally. Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (MWFC) is the ministry responsible to design greater coherence to policies for mainstreaming women in development. The project of Malaysia's Gender Gap Index (MGGI) was conducted by MWFC to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions aimed at the integration of women into development process and advocacy purposes. The conceptual of MGGI consists four parts; Part 1 is an overview of how to measure and monitor gender equality through the MGGI; Part 2 presents trends and patterns in the four sub dimension of MGGI (health, education, and economic activities and women empowerment). Part 3 is the key policies and programs that have contributed towards achieving gender equality in Malaysia. Part 4 identifies insights gained from experience of reducing gender inequality and examines future challenges [4]. The indicators selections in MGGI are based on best international practice, relevance to the Malaysian situation and availability of data.

In Malaysia, women have made considerable progress in education. Education gives women opportunities and enables them to make better choices. This is recognized by parents all over the world and they try to obtain as much education as possible for their children. The education from MGGI measures the level and change achievements in education. It includes two indicators disaggregated by sex; adult literacy rate and cross combined enrolment at primary, secondary and tertiary level. The indicators by MGGI [5] are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Indicators of Educational Achievement

Adult literacy: usually defined as the ability to read and write a simple statement for persons aged 15 and over.

The combined gross enrolment ratios: based on persons aged 6-24 years who are currently attending school and other institutions of higher learning.

2.1 Gender Issues in Occupational Choice

In Malaysia, secondary sources data as the Population and Housing Census reports, there have been some changes in the general trends occupational in the country but factual details of occupational based on gender. Information and data obtained from the study of macro and micro data show that. There are six factors affecting job selected by gender, namely (i) formal education and training, (ii) sharing of labor in the household, (iii) the conditions of work) [6].

(i) **Formal education and training**

Education and training explained the differences in the flow study selected according to gender. Women and men are given the same opportunity of formal education but women gain work experience low because they have the job in reduced labor market than male workers [7]. Therefore, the women workers earn lower wages. A decision made by women for not work continuously in the labor market is caused by view community about women's family responsibilities. Women gained familiarity and beliefs about their role more accountable to families, especially after the children are still small. There is a generation of respondents the second was to take a long break in the work to take care of children admitted to the hospital. Children feel more comfortable if cared for by the mother against the parents or other family members [6] Hence, employment in the secondary sector lower income and is under the hierarchy of an organization is in accordance with women who decide not to work continuously in the labor market.

(ii) **Sharing of labor in the household**

Problems faced by women in the labor market can be seen from responsibility on housework and child cares. This greatly affects the kind of ideological work suitable taken up by women as well as their ability to participate in employment in modern sector. Furthermore, the level and type of education received is determined by their future roles as mothers and wives. Empirical data show that the husband do a little home duties, while at the same time increase the home to her workload as the house. However, there are signs sign of changing attitudes in the family foundation. The men now want to help their wives doing household tasks such as washing clothes, washing dishes and the house, in which the alternative assistance from other members of her family could not obtained.

(iii) **Conditions of work**

Working women they had to divide between working hours with time managing household tasks, such as childrearing and household tasks. That is why many women choose jobs that provide comfort to those such as fixed working hours, location and work rules that easy. This can be seen as the following explanation. Work location is also a factor important when seeking to engage in formal employment. Half of the respondents who been and still work for jobs which are within five miles of the place residence. Fig. 1 shows the distribution of ages in occupational rate based on gender. The report is based on 2011 third quarter statistic of occupational sectors. The difference between males and females is obvious shown in all age ranges [8].



Figure 1: Labour rates based on gender and age range

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Survey was conducted into 200 respondents involved 176 students and 24 lecturers/tutors in University Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia. Set of questionnaire was distributed to respondents. 144 women and 56 men, mostly in age range 25-30 years old (45%), 22-25 years (44%), two respondents 15-20 years, 13 respondents in range 30-35 years and 9 respondents are in age above 40 years. Respondents are from various field of study in Diploma Level, Bachelor Degree and Post Graduates student. Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents' background.

Table 2: Respondents Background (N=200)

Education Background	Percentage (%)
Home Economics	1.00
Health	1.00
Tourism	2.00
Arts and Crafts	1.00
Hospitality	3.50
Agriculture	4.00
Management and Business	12.00
Information Technology	12.50
Science and Technology	10.50
Engineering Technology	35.50
Other	17.50

4.0 RESULTS

Items divided into three sections; gender equality from general perspective, men's and women's position in society and sources of information about TVET. Table 3 illustrates the responses on how respondents' perception in gender equality form general perspective. Most

respondents strongly agree that women helping in household. It also shown that most respondents are disagree and strongly disagree that women should be only housewives. 48.5% respondents agree women should have top position at work. Women also agree to be controlled by husband (38%) and do more domestic job than husband. (32%).

Table 3: Gender Equality from General Perspective (N=200)

Items (%)	1*		2*		3*		4*		5*	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Men helping in the household	43.0	12.0	26.0	14.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0	0
Women should be only housewives	2.0	3.0	5.5	3.0	27.0	15.5	37.5	5.5	0.5	0.5
Woman who pursue a profession	28.0	6.0	37.0	16.5	2.5	5.5	0.5	0.5	3.5	0
Woman who work in top position	21.0	3.0	48.5	14.5	1.0	8.0	0	2.0	1.5	0.5
Women controlling by husband	6.0	7.0	38.0	13.5	22.5	4.5	4.0	2.5	1.5	0.5
Woman do more domestic jobs than husband	2.0	5.5	32.0	12.0	26.5	5.0	5.5	3.5	6.0	2.0

*1- Strongly Agree; 2- Agree; 3- Disagree; 4- Strongly Disagree; 5- Uncertain; F- Female; M- Male

Responses for men's and women's position in society 67% percent agree that the opportunity for both gender are equal. 98% response agree that men are more physically stronger than women and 42% men are superior than women. When dealing with problems 43% agree that women are more flexible than men. 50% men are more reliable and assertive in their job and women can think carefully than women. 16% women are more tactful than women and 16% are less corrupted than men. Last concern in this section is 24% respondents agree that women are less risky in terms of management. Fig. 2 shows the summary of response of men's and women's position in society. Most respondents agree that men are physically stronger than women but 51% agree that women are mentally stronger. 50% respondents agree women think more carefully and men more reliable and assertive. There are low result for women less corrupted and more tactful. 67% respondents agree the position of women and men in society are equal.

Another section of questions was for lecturers, 79% agree that there are national policies on gender equality. 34% agree that proper implementation of the policies. There is no TVET institutions separating male and female students; 64% agree with that. In higher education decision making there is almost equal number (46%) in decision making position. Conclusion made in this section that gender issues are not mainstreamed in work, schools and higher institutions.

Last section of question is to identify how respondents find the information about TVET. 55% response they find the information from internet. 28% words of mouth from family and

friends. 32% from television education program, 18% from seminar/workshop or conference and 19% from newspaper.

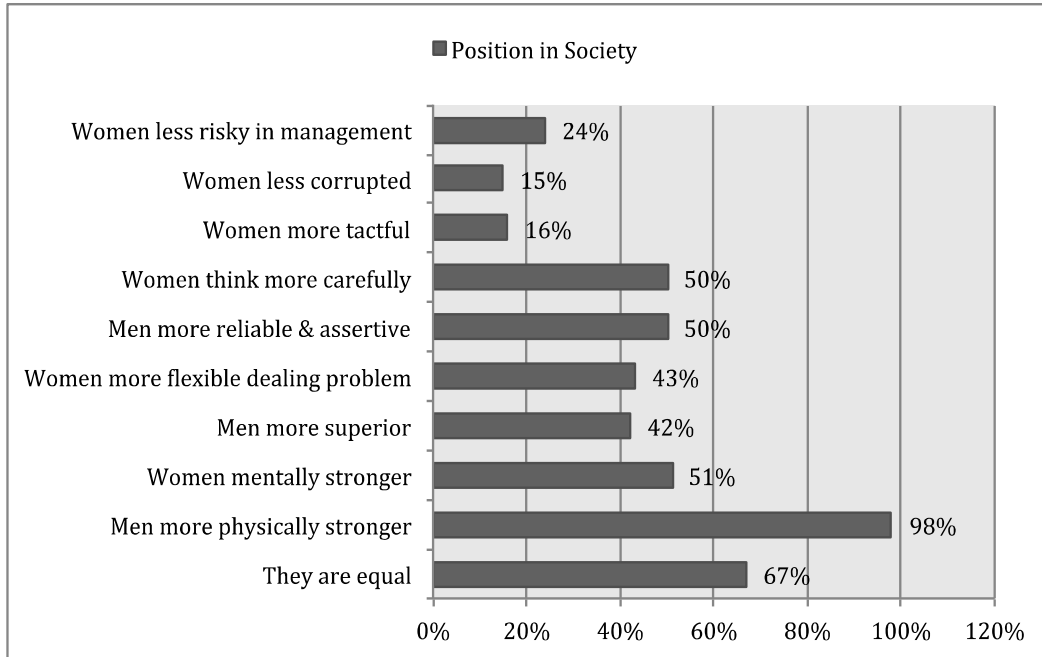


Figure 2: Position Men and Women in Society

As finding conclusion, 44% participating students in this research choose TVET because they know that TVET will give good job opportunities. 25% based on their preferences and 23% agree TVET is a professional education in short time. To join the TVET system in 60% respondents agree is easy to access. To improve the gender equality in TVET most respondents think improvi the female opportunites and developing regualtions for all sexes would be helpful.

5.0 DISCUSSION

The respondents in this research involved 200 male and female from various field of education. However, they are represent the TVET area since research are focusing on MTUN in Malaysia. From the results, women have to get permission for doing personal activities but they still earn money for family income. The most important sign in stated that women are disagree that they should be housewives. Currently, men also want their wives to support the family economy and men also agreed in helping household task. This situation based on the opportunity of education equal for both women and men and its can effect on the economic situation. The factors influenced gender equality involved government/legislation, society, school and employer [9]. Women position in society, show that most respondents agree men are physically strong than women, however in half of respondents agree women are mentally stronger than men. Working women and those in top-positions are tolerated and supported but surprisingly a lot of women agreed with doing more domestic jobs than their husbands. Most of the men agreed here as well. However, there were women who disagreed with this

attitude. Out of 144 women, 68 agreed and 64 disagreed. It seems as if women are taking on their new role as successful in business but also don't want to let go their family duties. In working at university, gender issues are not mainstreamed, at least a lot of participants don't know about it. The opportunity to create pathway in TVET is equal because Malaysia government give an opportunity to men and women in developing human capital. It is based on majority respondents think that men and women with same graduation in technology and engineering fields.

6.0 CONCLUSION

TVET is the focus issues in Malaysia especially in Malaysia Education Plan for Higher Education. This research only conducted in one of university in Malaysia whereas gender issues are not mainstreamed an action plan of implementation university programs. Government allocated 30% in decision maker in top management [7], it shows that Malaysia gives opportunities to women in policy making and implementation. TVET graduates also shown the increasing number of enrolment. There is an opportunity in career choice of students in TVET because there is no gender bias in selection of worker and the opportunity is equal to all.

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