CHAPTER III

ISSUES AND PROBLEMATIC EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA

The educational system is formed with the aim of preparing the young generation with a variety of knowledge and skills to enable them facing globalization and to provide the ideal education. The Ministry of Education has prepared, designed and planned to strengthen and improve the quality of education according to what the society needed. One of the most important elements is giving the same educational opportunity to all students without discriminating them in terms of culture, social class, ethnic group.

However, what we see at this point is that there are still a lot of issues that appear and are related to National Education Policy, including matters relating to the education structure, education access, education equity, the staff teaching quality, imbalance in infrastructure provision, Implementation of PPSMI Program, and irrelevant curriculum. This is in line with Sufean opinion that there are many educational problems that can be categorized as administration, education level, educational technology, school organization and teaching.¹

A. School System of Various Streams

In 2010 education system in Malaysia entered a modernization and globalization era and its has experienced a significant change. This is in line with the needs of the society and development of the times. Till now however we still can see that Malaysian's government is still implementing and continuing its old-standing school system of various streams.

by maintaining Sekolah Kebangsaan, Sekolah Kebangsaan Chinese and Sekolah Kebangsaan Tamil.

The education system is an issue that has always been the subject of discussion and debate which ultimately find no solution to lead to the transformation towards to use the new and better educational system. Education system problems are a very sensitive issue for Malaysians society. This is not an easy thing to gain the support from all level of society with different views and interests. Every policy that created or issued by the government is always influenced by the domestic politics that have occurred since the colonial period. The society understands that the government has always try and played a role in policy making processes to improve the quality of education.

The education system in Malaysia has not changed much especially in terms of ethnic unity, therefore the school is a solution as a starting point as well as a place for students to build good relationships, befriend, socialize, organize, know each other, and also build strong friendships with other students. However, with so many variants of the school system right now (National School and Chinese National School and Tamil national schools) this become threat for racial unity and diversity in Malaysia.

The school system right now is irrelevant to use because if it is still applied and used then the relations among society in Malaysia will fade and erode, because school is the first place for students to meet and learn from other students with different backgrounds. Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the government is willing to apply for a new system of education if and only all Malaysian society agree to use this new educational system.

In an effort to implement a new system, the government needs societ’s support and agreement because the government does not want to apply a new system which arises disunity and
received bad impression from all level of society. Untill now, some community groups in Malaysia disagree with the government's decision to use a new school system, for example, Chinese and Indian community groups that still use their own school system. They mention it is topreserve their mother language and to guarantee their rights. The idea to build and implement this new education system needs to be implemented because through this system the spirit of unity among Malaysian society can be nurtured.

Implementing a national school system will not result in the loss of certain community identities, which in fact will create a solid union among the malaysian society. The Chinese and Indians student may still perpetuate their mother tongue, even though they are studying in national school.

B. Teaching Education Science And Math In English

In 2003, during the reign of Dr. Tun. Mahathir Mohamad, one new foundation of education was introduced, namely the Teaching Education Science and Math in English. The purpose of Teaching Education Science and Math in English is to enable Malaysian society to mater in English language well. However in 2009 the Malaysian education minister announced that PPSMI would be removed entirely in 2012 because this program aroused some problems in the society. However, for some reason, for the students who have been using english from the beginning of first school they still could continue in the learning activities by using English language.

The issue of Teaching Education Science and Math in English is a major issue in the implementation of education in Malaysia because of opposition from the Melayu society, for the several reasons. The reason are 1) contradiction with the Constitution Article 152 which upholds the Melayu language 2) the performance of Melayu students are declined especially in Science education and Mathematics 3) lack of experienced of educators or teachers and 4) dissagreements from Melayu
language fighters, intellectuals, academics, politicians, NGOs or NGOs who fought for Melayu language as the official language in Malaysia.

There are some questions from the society, that was after 7 years of Teaching Education Science and Math in English implemented but is now getting opposed, whether the society feels that the implementation of PPSIM is not in line with the parents' expectations for their children, it is because students outside the city show a decline in their achievement due to their incomplete learning, especially in English language proficiency, and rural communities who have yet to receive the implementation of PPSIM because they are still confused with their future.

C. Curriculum And Co-Curriculum Development

Curriculum and Co-curriculum are arising problems which is considered as very important for the development of students. It is considered very important because it gives a positive impression on the individual in the formation of student discipline and identity. If the process of curriculum and co-curriculum design follow what the society want, then this policy does not cause any problems. However, in the designing process of curriculum and co-curriculum there are a weakness, so there is a negative reaction that seen from the society, for example, the national schools do not use Chinese and Tamil as the compulsory subjects, so the parents of Tamil and Chinese students do not want to bring their children to the national schools, because they think that mother language is an identity that must be preserved. For them, the mother language is the identity that must be maintained. Mukriz Mahathir (2008) gives an idea to apply only one school system and

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make Mandarin and Tamil language a compulsory subject for Chinese and Indian students.\textsuperscript{3} Melayu students can take Mandarin or Tamil as one of the preferred subjects. Indirectly, Melayu students will be able to understand and speak Mandarin or Tamil well, which ultimately can bridge the gap between the education among ethnic.

The society need to understand that the purpose of policy formulation and education system is based on Malaysian development need as the democratic country that has a multi-ethnic and religious compound society and to make Malaysia as developed country in the future. New Curriculum Primary School and Integrated Curriculum Secondary School is the curriculum that introduced to enhance unity of the society, but the effectiveness of this is curriculum still needs to be improvement.\textsuperscript{4}

D. Realizing Vision Or Wawasan 2020

The Vision 2020 has been triggered and initiated by the former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, on February 28, 1991. It aims to make Malaysia becomes more industrialized and to be developed country by 2020. The reformation that has been done in the education sector is the real step towards the realization of Vision 2020 and education sector become a key determinant.

In the education sector, the perfect schooling system is the most effective approach used to ensure the integration between society. By emphasising this model school integration system will be able to realized the vision 2020. However, Malaysia is


now facing a very crucial problem inside the society and this needs to be overcome, for the example, the relations within the society that still needs to be strengthen because it is remaind very weak with the conflict and jealousy among ethnic groups and the schooling system must become the drive force for the community or society that can be integrated through educational opportunities but there is still problem to implement the new schooling system because there are still some parties that want to maintain the old schooling system, while the other party wants a change.

The problems in education system occurring within the state are summarized as follows:

1. The emerging of the issues an bumiputra and non-Bumiputera right
2. The gap between Melayu and non-Melayu in terms of employment and income;
3. The problems of dropping out and education level between Melayu and non-Melayu students;
4. The gap relationship between Melayu and non-Melayu students;
5. The absence of friendship between Melayu and non-Melayu students, especially when they come back from the school.
6. There are no deep understanding and knowledge about the culture diversity, practices, and habits of the society

Public policy can be defined, such as any government decision, whether the government will make policy or not.\(^5\) In addition, public policy is one of the main choices for a person to explain, defend, lead, or describe what action is real or just

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objective. According to Ahmad Atory Hussin, public policy is a program or project designed by a government that has a specific purpose. For example, Razak 1956 Report and Rahman Talib Report in 1960 have shown the effectiveness of policy implementation. Every policy that has been made must be based on society or community needs so as not to cause the problems in the community itself. For example, one schooling system and Teaching Education Science And Mathematics In English as a benchmark in which the implemented of the policy needs to be improved immediately. Through education policy, the government can play it's role by: 1) creating all national schools, national Chinese school and national Tamil schools creating joint programs that involving all students and teachers 2) implementing the implementation of subjects in national schools, national Chinese school and national Tamil schools equipped by adding Mandarin and tamil language subjects as compulsory subjects 3) implementing one Schooling system can be implemented through the incorporation of elements - including culture, food, and customs it's has be found in national schools, Chinese national schools and Tamil national schools 4) adopting Curriculum and co-curricula need to be adapted base on society needs that emphasize the values of identity, patriotism, tolerance to be strengthened and added value and 5) making the idea of One Malaysia as a mandatory supplementary subject in all types of schools becoming a leading nation building because education is the main force driving the idea of One Malaysia. The government is a ruling party with full power to make decisions because it has received mandate from the society. The

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government should use all the required resources and freedoms to besparade

In delivering the information about education, not that everyone knows about the changes which occur on the basics, and they are also got often affected with wrong news. This circumstance causes the society to underestimate the government or the kingdom, even though the government or kingdom has done their responsibilities well. Now days is an open era of all information aspects. Through the Ministry of Information and Communications and other imperial agencies, the information dispersion can be a key driver in taking public trust in the government.

Information systems should be systematic and memorable, through the following ways 1) using the role of media whether printed or electronic media, as the main media by displaying advertisement on TV by the theme of diversity and also use the billboards that show the uniqueness of Malaysian society 2) making frequent promotion by opening one stop center, especially for the people of Malaysia which is out of town and display the government policy so that people become more understand 3) using a mobility van, this becomes a symbol and reference to the society in order to inform them the plans done by the government and 4) making a school as central source of information for all plans and programs which run by the government.

Third, public relations. We know that Malaysia has many ethnic and religious faiths and it is potentials for conflict, even within a single ethnic there were lot of problems arising. To maintain the honor of the state, the Malaysian society is also expected to be able to maintain their relationships among the society in order to become people who have the first-class mentality. According to Simon Fisheret, Conflict in the society are caused by polarization, distrust, and hostility between ethnic groups. This theory may indicate, why the unity of countries is difficult to achieve because the society have
negative thoughts and perceptions among other society. For example, the tragedy of 13 May 1969 became an indication of Malaysian public relations (Shamsul Amri Baharuddin, 1990: 31).

Through the implementation of well-designed educational policies and good community relations, the society's unity will surely be strengthened. If the basis of education is good but with poor public relations, of course the country will difficulty to move forward and developed. The policies that are designed must be balanced with the support of strong society unity.

E. Degradation in World University Rankings

Globalization encourages higher education institutions to improve competitiveness toward world-class universities through the process of internationalization, Internationalization is one of the ways that a country responds to globalization to improve its competitiveness, however the individuality of the nation must still be respected. Internationalization and globalization can be viewed dynamically, Internationalization and globalization are two concepts which are interrelated: globalization is a catalyst while internationalization is a response.

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In Asia where many countries are developing, internationalization is generally regarded as a strategy to enhance institutional competitiveness, reform the higher education system, and change organizational culture. Most Asian universities are enthusiastically adopting a global standard for the quality of education.\textsuperscript{11} Internationalization can contribute significantly to the national economy, through the money spent by international students, as well as increasing the number of active research staff and administrative positions within the university. This makes the economic benefit of the internationalization of higher education becomes vivid and international recognition that can be seen from the up and down the international world rank, the rank take from the dynamics of education international world rank. The indicator of academic reputation, employer reputation, faculty student, international faculty, international student and some other.

Malaysian education in the international stage has been dynamics since 2005, this table of 3.1 explains the world rankings of Malaysian university while the line indicates a world university ranking from 2005 to 2010 or becoming as the international recognition.

In 2005 Malaysia gained the top 200 universities in the world that was presented by University of Malaya (UM), which gained the 169 position among other universities. In 2006, this position decreased to 185 which is presented by Malaysia National University. Yet it still shows that education in Malaysia is still in the top 200 in the international arena. In the following year however Malaysia Education achievement decreased drastically in which the the Malaysian university was not one of the top 200 world university ranking. In 2007 and 2008 Malaysia education was ranked 246, in 2009
Malaysian University entered 230 world university ranking and in 2010 Malaysian Education showed the achievement by being the top 200 by gaining the 180th position.

Table 3.1

Degradation in World University Rankings

From this international issue, the government more serious in internationalizing the educational system in Malaysia to gain the international recognition through the various programs of student and staff mobility, the implementation for international curriculums, international networks of research and open teaching systems, as well as the recognition of quality standards in higher education between countries. Internationalization also has a positive impact on local socio-cultural life, regional and international communities. Student and staff who move among universities acquire a new perspective and understanding of the importance of building cooperation and they also have the opportunity to gain the international recognition. Internationalization offers new perspectives in "quality assurance" where the quality is an important part of building a campus environmen