

ANALYSIS OF PARENTS' COMMITMENT IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CAREER TRANSITION PROGRAM FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS IN NEGERI SEMBILAN

Mariza Zainudin*¹, Mohd Norazmi Nordin¹

¹Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia,
43600 UKM Bangi, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia.

*Corresponding author: Mariza Zainudin (P126126@siswa.ukm.edu.my)

ABSTRACT

Parents and families serve as support systems in realizing the Career Transition Program (CTP), yet the knowledge and commitment of parents toward this program are still under-researched. Therefore, this study was conducted to explore parents' understanding of CTP and to assess their commitment to implementing the program for Special Education Needs Students (SENS). This study is qualitative and utilizes semi-structured interviews. Six parents of SENS who are currently undergoing CTP in the Special Education Integration Program (SEIP) were selected from six districts in Negeri Sembilan as respondents. Interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings of the study from the aspect of parental knowledge were explained based on the meaning of the knowledge and the benefits gained from CTP. Meanwhile, the aspect of commitment was examined in terms of the time, energy, and financial involvement required for CTP. The interview analysis revealed that all parents lack sufficient understanding and knowledge of CTP implementation due to the lack of exposure and detailed explanations given to them. The researcher hopes that this study will provide important information to those looking to implement CTP in schools running the Special Education Integration Program.

Keywords: Knowledge, Commitment, Career Transition Program, Special Education Needs Students, Special Education Integration Program.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Career Transition Program (CTP) is a program specifically designed for special education students (SENS) with learning difficulties who are enrolled in the Special Education Integration Program (SEIP). The program aims to equip them with skills and adaptability to transition into the real working world. According to the Ministry of Education Malaysia (2019), CTP is implemented to support the transition process of SENS towards entering the workforce and adulthood, focusing on family, social, community, and recreational aspects based on the abilities, strengths, interests, and potential of SENS after completing school. This program is highly beneficial for the skill development and support of SENS, starting from secondary school until they finish their education. In addition, the Career Transition Program provides psychological, emotional, and mental support to help SENS adjust to various environments, such as school, family, training locations, and workplaces. It strengthens their self-management, advocacy, and social skills, enabling them to build self-confidence and live independently. Through self-management skills, SENS will learn to

handle daily life challenges more effectively, while advocacy empowers them to fight for their rights and needs in society. Furthermore, strong social skills enable them to interact well in various social and professional situations. With the combination of these skills, SENS will be better prepared to face the working world with high confidence and competence, thereby opening broader opportunities for career success.

According to Yusaini's (2019), the success of programs like CTP heavily depends on the commitment of teachers. Without teacher commitment, student achievement and development will not occur. Similarly, the implementation of CTP for SENS relies on the commitment shown by both teachers and parents, which is crucial to realizing its success. The Malaysia Education Blueprint (2013-2025) also emphasizes a learning system that involves the commitment of parents, the community, and the private sector. The commitment between schools and parents is seen through the shared responsibility between teachers and parents and the expanded role of parents in improving their children's achievements. This is evident in the success of a program known as "Sarana Ibu Bapa." As outlined in the Malaysia Education Blueprint (2013-2025), "Sarana Ibu Bapa" includes key elements such as creating a conducive learning environment at home, social interaction, communication, and support for children's excellence. Therefore, the role, support, and guidance of parents are essential to the success of the Career Transition Program.

This statement is supported by Yusaini's (2019) study, which suggests that CTP should be expanded by involving parents and teachers in collaboration with employers to accept SENS into the workforce. Furthermore, parents must play a role in providing commitment to schools and external agencies (industries) as they are more familiar with and closer to their children at home (Fitri, 2020). Therefore, parents need to dedicate time and attention to their children, in addition to showing love and care, even when they are busy with work. In Nurulhuda's (2019) study, six main themes were identified that can help SENS strive toward a better and more independent life: self-confidence and advocacy, social skills, work efficiency, educational background, parental involvement, and further education. In schools, every program implemented should focus on the success of SENS, especially in the field of skills.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Special education students (SENS) require specific guidance in determining their career paths after completing school. This is because exposure and guidance on knowledge and skills alone are insufficient to fully prepare them for the working world after graduation (Nurrawidah, 2019). Therefore, the Career Transition Program (CTP) is one of the programs designed to train SENS in the knowledge and skills related to employment, helping them integrate into the community after school. Parents play a crucial role in building the confidence of SENS, so they feel more prepared to face the working world. Thus, for CTP to succeed, increasing awareness about CTP and fostering a strong commitment between parents and the school is essential.

In Nurulhuda's study (2019), based on Epstein's Model of Parental Involvement, several elements that can enhance parental engagement were highlighted, including parenting, communication, volunteering, home learning, decision-making, and community collaboration. The findings of Nurulhuda's study also indicated that many parents, when asked about CTP, were unclear and did

not fully understand the purpose and objectives of the program. This is one of the reasons why parents often show a lack of commitment to the implementation of CTP for their children. Therefore, there is a need to examine the extent of parents' knowledge about CTP itself, how it is implemented, and the benefits that can be gained from it.

Additionally, the commitment of parents to CTP, including the time, effort, and costs involved in running CTP, will be explored in this study. In line with these needs, this research is necessary to achieve the objective of identifying parents' knowledge and commitment to the implementation of CTP, based on the Taxonomy Model of Transition Programs, through the element of family involvement.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. Curriculum of the Special Education Integration Program

The *Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Menengah Pendidikan Khas (KSSMPK)*, which has been implemented in secondary schools, refers to the *Dokumen Standard Kurikulum dan Pentaksiran (DSKP)*, built upon six core pillars to produce well-rounded individuals, in line with the National Education Philosophy by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (2017). These six pillars are communication, spirituality, attitudes and human values, self-skills, physical and aesthetic development, and science and technology.

Additionally, a special vocational curriculum was introduced by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (2015) to assist SENS (special education students) within the Special Education Integration Program (SEIP) in preparing for a career. This curriculum consists of six skill-related components: cooking, sewing, agriculture, handicrafts, services, and maintenance, utilizing basic facilities already available in schools.

3.2. Taxonomy Model of Transition Programs

According to Kohler and Field (2003), the Transition Program Taxonomy Model is defined by examining five key components, one of which is family involvement. In the study by Musfirah and Aliza (2023), the first component of family involvement includes participation in policy-making, service delivery, evaluation, and decision-making, as well as parents' roles as coaches and mentors, along with a support network throughout the transition process.

The second component emphasizes the authority of parents, including pre-planning for the Individualized Education Program (IEP) and structured methods to identify the needs of SENS in following the Career Transition Program. The third component focuses on parental training, which includes essential practices such as goal-setting, support, IEP procedures, and knowledge about relevant agencies involved in the transition process.

This comprehensive engagement of parents ensures a well-rounded approach to addressing the specific career needs and future prospects of SENS.

3.3. Career Transition Program

Since 2019, the Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM) has introduced the Career Transition Program (CTP) to assist special education students (SENS) from Form 1 to Form 5 (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2019). The program for SENS is structured around courses offered by schools, skill centers, industries, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). The objective of CTP, which is to be implemented over five years, is to help SENS acquire sufficient skills in various employment sectors, tailored to their abilities.

According to Musfirah and Aliza (2023), career transition refers to any type of program or activity designed by schools, whether it involves placing students in career training outside the school environment or within. The goal is to prepare SENS for real-world employment opportunities by equipping them with the necessary skills for their respective fields.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Nadia et al. (2021), research methodology is the process used to conduct a study and obtain accurate information necessary to carry out the research. In this section, the researcher will explain how the study was conducted by detailing the research design, sample selection, research location, research instruments, and research procedures. These elements are used to explore the understanding and commitment of parents toward the implementation of the Career Transition Program (CTP) for Special Education Needs Students (SENS) in Negeri Sembilan.

4.1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews to examine the understanding and commitment of parents toward the implementation of the Career Transition Program (CTP) for Special Education Needs Students (SENS) in Negeri Sembilan. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of parents' understanding and commitment to CTP. The semi-structured interview method was selected due to its flexibility and ability to accommodate different language abilities, as respondents have varying levels of language comprehension. This method also helps the researcher delve deeper into the issues from different perspectives provided by each respondent. The scope of the study involved a small number of respondents, with data collected through online interviews and manually analyzed.

4.2. Research Sample

In this qualitative approach, the study's scope is small but sufficient to gather the necessary information for the research. A total of six parents, representing six districts, were selected as respondents for this study. They were chosen because their children are SENS students currently participating in the Career Transition Program (CTP). The respondents were thoroughly briefed, and they were informed that all information provided would only be used for the purpose of this study. All respondents cooperated well throughout the research process.

4.3. Research Location

This study was conducted across six districts in Negeri Sembilan, namely Seremban, Port Dickson, Rembau, Tampin, Kuala Pilah, and Jempol Jelevu. One respondent represented a school in each district, with a total of six respondents. The selection of research locations included both urban and rural schools to provide a broader perspective.

4.4. Research Instrument

The study utilized interviews as the research instrument. The interview questions were designed based on the issues highlighted in the research questions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted remotely via phone due to the geographical distances between districts, and this method was chosen for its convenience and efficiency in obtaining data. The semi-structured approach allowed respondents to provide explanations in a more systematic and relaxed manner. However, the discussions between the researcher and the respondents remained focused on the scope and specific research questions being studied.

4.5. Research Procedure

The researcher conducted phone interviews based on appointments scheduled with the respondents according to mutually agreed dates and times. Prior to starting the interviews, the researcher provided a brief explanation to all respondents about the study, followed by obtaining their consent to participate in the interview. The questions posed to the respondents were based on the research questions, which covered six key themes and were carried out using a semi-structured interview format. With the respondents' consent, the interviews were recorded. The data obtained from the six respondents were manually analyzed by the researcher.

5. Research Findings

The analysis of this study is based on the research questions, which aim to assess parents' knowledge and commitment to the implementation of the Career Transition Program for Special Education Needs Students (SENS) in Negeri Sembilan. The research questions were discussed with the respondents through semi-structured interviews conducted via phone. In this study, six parents from six different districts in Negeri Sembilan were selected as participants. These participants had diverse backgrounds in terms of education, age, and occupation. Before the interviews, the researcher provided each participant with an explanation of the study's background to ensure they could give their full commitment to the research.

Table 1: Respondents Demographic

Peserta Kajian	Umur	Latar belakang pendidikan	Kerjaya
PK 1 (Seremban)	35	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher

PK 2 (Port Dickson)	42	SPM (High School Diploma)	House wife
PK 3 (Tampin)	37	Diploma	Nurse
PK 4 (Kuala Pilah)	40	SPM (High School Diploma)	E-hailing Driver
PK 5 (Jempol Jelebu)	48	Master's Degree	Entrepreneur
PK 6 (Rembau)	38	SPM (High School Diploma)	Clerk

5.1. Parents' Knowledge of the Career Transition Program (CTP) Implementation Based on Three Themes: CTP Definition, CTP Management, and CTP Objectives

The analysis revealed that the participants had limited knowledge and exposure related to the Career Transition Program (CTP). According to the respondents, the information they received was not extensive. They frequently communicated with teachers about their children's academic matters, but they were given less information regarding CTP. Despite this, parents made efforts to understand how CTP is managed and its objectives. All participants acknowledged this as reflected in their statements:

Here are the translated responses from the participants regarding their understanding of the Career Transition Program (CTP):

PK1: *"CTP is the Career Transition Program. The teacher takes students to work with selected companies. The teacher wants to expose my child to the working environment."*

PK2: *"I've never heard of CTP before. But I was informed that the teacher takes my child for work training with a company. This might help my child get a job in the future."*

PK3: *"A teacher mentioned CTP, but I don't remember much. My child told me that they're learning to trade at the school cooperative. With this experience, it will be easier for my child to get a job."*

PK4: *"CTP is the Career Transition Program. My child told me they worked at a laundry company. Later, they might be able to open their own laundry business."*

PK5: *"CTP is like a work-study program. A teacher told me about it, but I can't recall the details. My child is taken outside for work. This will help my child gain experience and be more confident in communicating with others."*

PK6: *"CTP is a program that encourages special education students to meet people outside. It's to help them build confidence and bravery. This way, they'll be able to get a job once they finish school."*

5.2. Parents' and Guardians' Commitment to the Implementation of the Career Transition Program (CTP) Based on Three Themes: Time, Effort, and Financial Resources

Although parents received limited exposure to the details of CTP, they still showed a strong commitment in terms of time, effort, and financial resources needed for the program's implementation. This commitment indirectly supports the school or teachers in implementing CTP in the future, helping to achieve the main goal of guiding SENS to build their careers and secure their future. This commitment was evident through the interviews with the study participants, as reflected in the following responses:

"I work the same hours as my child attends school, so it's hard for me to contribute time. But if the teacher informs me, I'll try to adjust my schedule. So far, the teacher hasn't asked for any assistance in implementing the career transition program, but if they need help in the future, I'll contribute. If they need financial support, they just need to let me know." (PK1)

"If the teacher asks me to send my child to the training site in the morning, I can do it. But so far, the teacher hasn't asked me to do that. I think the teacher can manage it, or maybe they don't want parents to interfere. As of now, I haven't been informed that my child needs any financial support." (PK2)

"I work in shifts, so it's hard for me to send my child to outside training, but luckily, my child is doing CTP at the school cooperative. If the teacher needs financial resources, just let me know." (PK3)

"The teacher hasn't told me what I need to do for my child's industrial training. I will help as much as I can since I also work as a Grab driver, so my time is limited. If they need financial support, they can inform me early." (PK4)

"I work for myself, so if the teacher needs me to drop my child off at the practical site in the morning, I can do that. If they need any financial support, they can just let me know." (PK5)

"I can't contribute much time since I work, but I might be able to pick up my child when they finish since I have a break at 1 p.m. I'm ready to provide financial support if needed by the teacher." (PK6)

These responses show that although parents may not be fully informed about CTP, they are still willing to offer time, effort, and financial resources to support the program and their children's career development.

From the interviews, it was evident that parents' understanding and commitment to CTP implementation were not comprehensive, as they lacked sufficient exposure to the program. However, they expressed a strong concern for their children's career paths and future, even willing to sacrifice time, effort, and financial resources to support their children's well-being.

6. RESEARCH DISCUSSION

Referring to the findings from the interviews with six parents, it is clear that they received limited exposure to the Career Transition Program (CTP). In this regard, parents need to be actively involved, particularly in the planning and decision-making processes regarding their children's future. According to Nurulhuda (2019), efforts should be made to enhance parents' advocacy skills to encourage their active involvement in planning and decision-making for their children's future. Various platforms can be used to disseminate information and raise awareness about CTP so that parents are well-informed.

In Musfirah's study (2023), it is stated that parents' awareness and concerns should be supported by knowledge and participation to establish proper planning strategies to achieve the transition goals. Relevant parties need to address existing challenges by offering more programs or parenting courses that can provide input and exposure to parents about CTP.

The lack of exposure and knowledge about CTP is not a reason for parents to avoid commitment or cooperation with schools, especially with special education teachers. Despite this, parents have demonstrated awareness and initiative by working alongside schools to provide any necessary support, whether in the form of time, effort, or financial resources.

7. CONCLUSION

Overall, it is evident that parents' knowledge and commitment must go hand in hand to ensure that the objectives of the Career Transition Program (CTP) are effectively achieved for the benefit of SENS's future. According to Norizan's study (2023), CTP serves as a platform for teachers to prepare SENS for real-world employment and equip them with the ability to be independent in society. Therefore, teachers must ensure that parents receive sufficient exposure to CTP so they can work together to shape the future of SENS.

Parents also need to be diligent in understanding and absorbing the information provided by teachers to ensure smoother implementation of CTP. Despite the challenges, parents have shown initiative and readiness to support the program by contributing time, effort, or financial resources to achieve CTP's objectives for SENS.

REFERENCE

Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (2013). *Pelan Pembangunan Pendidikan Malaysia 2013-2025. Pendidikan Pra Sekolah hingga Lulusan Menengah.*

- Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (2017). Dasar Pendidikan Kebangsaan. Bahagian Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan, Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia.
- Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (2019). Surat Pekeliling Ikhtisas Bil 4 Pelaksanaan Program Transisi Ke Kerjaya Murid Berkeperluan Pendidikan Khas.
- Kohler, P.D. & Field, S. (2003). Transition-Focused Eductaion : Foundation for the Future. *The Journal of Special Education*, 37 (3), 174-183.
- Mohamad Fitri Tordin (2021), Amalan Taksonomi Program Transisi ke Arah Pelaksanaan Program Transisi Kerjaya Terhadap Murid Berkeperluan Khas (MBK). *Journal of Quran Sunnah Education and Special Needs*. Vol. 5, 2590-3799.
- Mohamad Hisyam Mohd Hashim (2016). Program Transisi Kerjaya Murid Berkeperluan Pendidikan Khas Masalah Pembelajaran. *6th International Conference in Education Technical and Vocational In Educational Training (NCE-TVET)*.
- Mohd Yusaini (2019). Komitmen Guru Pendidikan Khas Terhadap Pelaksanaan Program Transisi Kerjaya dan Hubungannya Dengan Kepimpinn Distributif Pentadbir. *Special Education Conference (SEIC) 2019*; 25-27.
- Musfirah. N., Aliza. A. (2023). Pengetahuan dan Penglibatan Ibu Bapa dalam Pelaksanaan Program Transisi Kerjaya Terhadap Murid Berkeperluan Khas. *Malaysian Journal of Special Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH)*. Vol 8 (5) 002293.
- Nadia Abd Rahim, Nor Aqilah Meor Fadzir, Nur Adilah Hani Zaimal, Firli Fairulyzan, Aris yahaya, Zatul Iffah Zainol, Mohd Razimi Husin (2021). Implikasi Gaya Pembelajaran Koperatif Subjek Sains Bagi Murid Tahap Dua di Sekolah Kebangsaan Bandar Baru Rawang. *Juornal of Humanities and Social Sciences*. Vol. 3 (2) 57-66.
- Norizan M. T., Kama. S. (2023) Kesediaan Guru Pendidikan Khas Dalam Pelaksanaan Program Transisi Kerjaya. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bitara UPSI*. Vol 16 Special Issue 2821-3173 (1-14).
- Nurulhuda Mohamed Nor (2019). Penglibatan Ibu Bapa Murid Berkeperluan Pendidikan Khas Dalam Pelaksanaan Program Transisi Kerjaya di Sekolah.
<http://ptsldigitalv2.ukm.my:8080/jspui/handle/123456789/459944>