



## Community Perspective on the Teacher-Centred Approach in Primary Schools in Muar

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### Article Information

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### Abstract

Early education is essential, as it shapes the foundation of a child's identity and allows for the development of fundamental skills needed for long-term growth. However, the current teacher-centered pedagogical approach proves ineffective in accommodating the modern challenges faced by primary school students. Specifically, due to excessive screentime, most students lack the ability to sustain focus in the classroom, particularly in environments lacking constant engagement and interaction. The research aims to understand the perspective of the local community in Muar regarding this subject. This is achieved by analyzing their learning experiences and observing their views on how this learning approach influences the younger generations. A quantitative approach was utilized, with data collected from a minimum of 150 respondents using a structured, self-administered questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The findings revealed the majority of the local community agreed with the teacher-centred approach to be used in Muar because of the effectiveness and high benefits based on the data taken, with the mean score of 3.770. Simultaneously, the Cronbach's Alpha result of 0.709 showed an acceptable internal consistency. These findings proved that the teacher-centred approach is still effective and massively accepted among the community in Muar, due to its capability to enhance cognitive functions and numeracy skills for primary school students. It was also revealed the pedagogy supports effective teaching practices through structured instruction, classroom management, and complete syllabus coverage for young learners.

### INTRODUCTION

Primary education is significantly influential in the cognitive development of the children, their attitude to learning, and their academic preparedness to future schooling stages. At this formative level, students begin to acquire critical skills such as literacy, numeracy, problem-solving, and social interaction with such skills are the basis of lifelong learning. Due to this fact, the teaching approach on primary school level is particularly essential as young learners require systematic support in terms of instruction, clear explanations, and systematic supervision to effectively learn

new concepts. It is well known that the teacher-centred approach is a successful educational technique to bring the basic knowledge and maintain order in the classroom. It focuses on direct teaching, systematic presentation of materials and monitoring of classroom work by teachers. This approach is specifically suitable in case of students who are still learning the basic academic skills because it enables the teachers to regulate the learning process, monitor the understanding of the students, and ensure a comprehensive coverage of the syllabus (Murphy, Eduljee, and Croteau, 2021).

Nevertheless, due to the attention on student-centred learning techniques in recent years, the relevance of the teacher-centred education has been debated more and more. Active involvement, collaboration, inquiry-based instruction, and the cultivation of advanced order of thinking abilities that are all are believed to be essential in preparing the students to meet the demands of the twenty first century that is accorded the priority in student centred strategies. Despite the value of these strategies in the long run, the real statistics show that it is often challenging to implement them in the elementary school setting. Various factors might slow down the effective implementation, such as a large group of students, the unavailability of instructional materials, time, and the varying degrees of teacher preparation, particularly among younger students whose needs are still to be unceasingly supervised and structured (Che Mat & Jamaludin, 2024). Due to this fact, the student-centred approach of primary education remains more or less successful in different school settings.

Community and parental expectations also impact tremendously on perceptions of good teaching and learning in Malaysia. This has led to the fact that the level of approval, confidence, and encouragement that is accorded to different teaching strategies that are applied in schools, particularly in the primary level, is shaped by the attitude of the community. Therefore, this research is aimed at examining the perception of the community towards the teacher-centred approach in the primary schools in Muar, Johor. The study will help inform the teaching techniques, facilitate the development of a teacher, and ensure that the pedagogical patterns remain in accordance with the educational purposes and the expectations of the community, exploring the views of the community regarding the effectiveness of instruction and the classroom life.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The teacher centered approach is where teachers take the lead in the planning, delivery, and management of classroom activities and students simply receive information. This approach is dominated by the delivery of organized lessons and authoritative teaching, which allows for the efficient covering of the curriculum and organized management of the class (Murphy, Eduljee, & Croteau, 2021). While alternative pedagogy is being promoted to a higher degree, the teacher dominated approach is still more prevalent due to the order and discipline, and structured teaching that is provided (Altun, 2023). In primary schools where children are still acquiring the basic cognitive and learning skills, teacher dominated classrooms are found to be the most suitable, and they are often viewed as academically oriented by parents and the community (Ghafar, 2023). Furthermore, there are benefits of teaching in a structured manner to keep children in a class that is of a reasonable size in order which is beneficial in larger and more diverse classes, making teacher centered approaches beneficial and easy to use in everyday teaching.

The ability for teachers to control the speed of lessons, control the flow of the class, and ensure that the entire syllabus gets taught continues to add to the popularity of teacher centered instruction (Ghafar,2023). Explanation based instruction is really common in Malaysia, especially in rural and semi urban primary schools where teachers guided practice and then check for understanding and then use repetition to ensure the student understandings and the class stays orderly (Ghaizi et al, n.d.). Also, the use of teacher centered methods continues to use community expectations, especially parents that assume that teacher centered is the only way to teach and leads to high quality education and academic success (Murphy, Eduljee and Croteau, 2021). These expectations and perceptions influence teaching practices in the community, where parents are expecting the teachers to lead their children in learning content and skills, these are the expectations in teaching in Muar, where children are taught in the classroom.

Teachers' use of instruction that is learned is very effective and teachers use it in the appropriate way of instruction. Teacher instruction is effective especially in young learners where they are and are more effective if the teacher provides feedback and support (Darling-Hammond, Flook, Cook-Harvey, Barron and Osher, 2020). Thus, teachers use certain methods that are related to certain developmental stages of children. These are related to primary school education where children learn more skills including literacy and numeracy (Altun, 2023).

The student centered method (SCM) is an alternative to traditional teacher centered method that focuses on higher order thinking skills development, collaborative learning, and active student participation. Instead of just passively absorbing material from teachers, this method describes students as active learners who create knowledge through discussions, problem solving and practical applications. Kember and Leung (2021) suggest that by developing

critical 21st century abilities like critical thinking, communication, creativity and teamwork, SCM greatly improves student engagement and learning results. The community values these abilities more and more since they help students adjust to a social and economic context that is changing rapidly. Additionally, by letting students be in charge of their own education, SCM promotes learner autonomy. By attending to individual needs and a variety of learning styles in the classroom, this method also encourages inclusive education.

Although the benefits it provides, SCM acceptance has a number of limitations, especially when it comes to elementary education. Its success is inhibited by problems with assessment techniques, classroom management and teacher preparation to use student centered methods successfully (Yusof & Saad, 2022). Despite the fact that the Malaysian education system encourages SCM through the 21st Century Learning (PAK210 program, its implementation in primary schools is still uneven because of a lack of resources, large class sizes and different teacher preparation levels (Rahman et al., 2023). These difficulties raise questions about whether SCM can be implemented successfully in actual classroom environments, particularly in the absence of adequate institutional and community support.

Particularly in elementary schools, there is an incentive for the community to choose the method that emphasizes teachers over the student centred method. This preference is based on the idea that a teacher centered method offers greater control over the classroom, a more defined structure and greater focus on academic success and exam performance. According to Lim (2022), parents and community people frequently evaluate the efficiency of instruction by looking at student academic performance, discipline and preparedness for higher education all of which they believe are more directly supported by instruction provided by teachers. Because of this, even though the student centered method has long term advantages, society may be hesitant to adopt it unless there are demonstrable gains in academic performance and classroom management, which will affect the level of support provided to teachers who use these strategies. By emphasizing student autonomy and active learning, a number of nations promote a student centered method in elementary education. For instance New Zealand's national curriculum implements a student centered approach that promotes inquiry based learning and student voice (Alton-Lee, 2022).

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional research design to examine the community perspective on the teacher-centered approach in primary school in Muar, Johor Bharu. A total of 150 respondents representing diverse demographic backgrounds within the Muar district were collected from the Bandar Muar using a convenience sampling method. Data were collected through a google form questionnaire, divided to three sections: demographic, community perspectives on teacher-centered teaching approaches and community perceptions of improvements in teaching approaches. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were employed to analyze the data, while Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to assess the internal consistency of the instrument, with values exceeding 0.60 considered acceptable for reliability. Ethical considerations were rigorously observed throughout the study, ensuring participants anonymity, informed consent, voluntary participation, and the confidentiality of all collected data.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### *Profile of Respondent*

Table 1.0 presents the demographic profile of the 150 respondents involved in the study. In terms of gender, the majority of respondents were male (54.0%), while females accounted for 46.0%. This indicates a slightly higher participation of male respondents in the survey. Most respondents were aged between 18–25 years (32.7%), followed by those aged 26–35 years (30.7%). Respondents aged 36–45 years represented 24.0%, while those above 46 years formed the smallest group at 12.7%. This suggests that the sample was largely made up of young and middle-aged adults. For ethnicity, Malay respondents formed the largest group (48.7%), followed by Chinese (32.0%) and Indian respondents (18.0%). Only a small proportion of respondents came from Kadazan Dusun and Orang Asli communities, each representing 0.7%. Half of the respondents held a Bachelor's degree (50.0%), making it the most common qualification. This was followed by Diploma/Certificate holders (28.0%) and Secondary School graduates (14.7%). Only 7.3% of respondents had postgraduate qualifications, while none reported having only primary school education. Most of the respondents were from the private sector (28.7%) and students (26.0%). Self-employed individuals accounted for 20.0%, while those in the government sector and housewives each represented 12.7%. Lastly, the area of residence shows that most respondents lived in urban areas (43.3%), followed by suburban areas (41.3%), while only 15.3% resided in rural areas.

Table 1.0  
PROFILE OF RESPONDENT (N=150)

Profile	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	81	54.0
	Female	69	46.0
Age	18-25 years old	49	32.7
	26-35 years old	46	30.7
	36-45 years old	36	24.0
	>46 years old	19	12.7
Ethnicity	Malay	73	48.7
	Chinese	48	32.0
	India	27	18.0
	Kadazan Dusun	1	0.7
	Orang Asli	1	0.7
Highest Level of Education	Primary School	-	-
	Secondary School	22	14.7
	Diploma/Certificate	42	28.0
	Bachelor's Degree	75	50.0
	Postgraduate	11	7.3
Occupation	Government Sector	19	12.7
	Private Sector	43	28.7
	Self-Employed	30	20.0

	Housewife	19	12.7
	Student	39	26.0
Area of Residence	Rural	23	15.3
	Suburban	62	41.3
	Urban	65	43.3

According to Pallant (2016), Cronbach's alpha is used to assess the internal consistency of a scale, indicating how closely related the items are as a group. An alpha value of 0.9 or above is considered excellent, between 0.8 and 0.9 is good, 0.7 to 0.8 is acceptable, 0.6 to 0.7 is questionable, 0.5 to 0.6 is poor, and below 0.5 is unacceptable. Table 1.1 shows the reliability analysis for the variable *Community Perspectives on Teacher-Centered Teaching Approaches*. The construct consisted of 10 items and recorded a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.709. Hence, this value is classified as acceptable, indicating that the items used to measure community perspectives are internally consistent and reliable for further analysis.

Table 1.1  
RELIABILITY TEST B

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability Assumed
Community Perspectives on Teacher-Centered Teaching Approaches	10	0.709	Acceptable

Table 1.2 outlines the interpretation scale used to classify mean scores in the study. Mean scores ranging from 1.00 to 2.33 are categorised as low, scores between 2.34 and 3.67 are considered medium, while scores from 3.58 to 5.00 are classified as high. Table 1.3 presents the mean score and standard deviation for *Community Perspectives on Teacher-Centered Teaching Approaches*. The mean score recorded was 3.770 with a standard deviation of 5.750, based on a total of 150 respondents. According to Table 1.2, mean scores that fall within the range of 3.58 to 5.00 are classified as high. Therefore, the mean score reported in Table 1.3 reflects a strong level of agreement among respondents regarding teacher-centered teaching approaches.

Table 1.2  
LEVEL OF MEAN SCORE RANGE

Mean Score Range	Level
1.00 – 2.33	Low
2.34 – 3.67	Medium
3.58 – 5.00	High

Table 1.3  
MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION B

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Community Perspectives on Teacher-Centered Teaching Approaches	3.770	5.750	150

According to Pallant (2016), Cronbach’s alpha is used to assess the internal consistency of a scale, indicating how closely related the items are as a group. An alpha value of 0.9 or above is considered excellent, between 0.8 and 0.9 is good, 0.7 to 0.8 is acceptable, 0.6 to 0.7 is questionable, 0.5 to 0.6 is poor, and below 0.5 is unacceptable. Table 1.4 shows the reliability analysis for the variable *Community Perceptions of Improvements Teaching Approaches*. The construction consisted of 9 items and recorded a Cronbach’s Alpha value of 0.769. Hence, this value is classified as *acceptable*, indicating that the items used to measure community perceptions are internally consistent and reliable for further analysis.

Table 1.4  
RELIABILITY TEST C

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach’s Alpha	Reliability Assumed
Community Perceptions of Improvements in Teaching Approaches	9	0.769	Acceptable

Referring to Table 1.2 which outlines the interpretation scale used to classify mean scores in the study. Mean scores ranging from 1.00 to 2.33 are categorised as low, scores between 2.34 and 3.67 are considered medium, while scores from 3.58 to 5.00 are classified as high. Table 1.5 presents the mean score and standard deviation for *Community Perceptions of Improvements in Teaching Approaches*. The mean score recorded was 4.432 with a standard deviation of 3.798, based on a total of 150 respondents. According to Table 1.2, mean scores that fall within the range of 3.58 to 5.00 are classified as high. Therefore, the mean score reported in Table 1.5 reflects a strong level of agreement among respondents regarding teacher-centered teaching approaches.

Table 1.5  
MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION C

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Community Perceptions of Improvements in Teaching Approaches	4.432	3.798	150

**CONCLUSION**

In conclusion , a survey about Teacher Centred Approach in primary school in Muar shows multiple types of people and background which is they were dominantly young and middle-aged, slightly male-dominated, having great education level and variation ethnic background, and all mostly working in the private sector or studying and huge participations from people that leaving in urban and suburban areas. By using questionnaire methods , the majority of the local community agree with the Teacher Centred Approach to be used in their place since it gives a lot of benefits and also builds student confidence and enhances their personal knowledge. Plus this point was supported by data in Table 1.3 that shows a high mean score that indicates a strong level of agreement among respondents it is because teacher-centred teaching approaches were very crucial to be used in all around the world and not just Muar since it remains a relevant and effective method, particularly in primary school since it is the place where students are still developing their fundamental cognitive, literacy, and accounting skills. Its systematic and teacher-led nature allows for better classroom management, controlled lesson pacing and complete syllabus coverage.

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