

Exploring the Assessor's Competency in Selecting the Participant for the International Youth Exchange Program in Malaysia

Meneroka Kecekapan Penilai dalam Memilih Peserta Program Pertukaran Belia Antarabangsa di Malaysia

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Abstract: In the selection process, the competency of the assessor is vital. Competency reflects someone's quality or state of having sufficient knowledge, judgment, skill, or strength for a particular duty or respect. Undoubtedly, incompetency of the evaluation also happens when the assessors are beyond their professional capacity as assessors. When this situation happens, it will lead to the influence of personal judgments. To explore the influence of the selection process, the objective of this study is to determine the competency of the assessor in the decision-making process during the recruitment to select the candidate to represent Malaysia in the International Youth Exchange Program. The qualitative research method was chosen to conduct this study. Data was collected through an in-depth interview with five former assessors from the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the association's former assessor. Since Malaysia is under Movement Control Order, the interview was conducted via an online platform like Google Meet. The study found that the assessors were found to be competent as assessors. There is no element of gender discrimination that happened during the selection process. However, the credibility of the assessor from the NGOs is doubted. They are exposed to the conflict of interest of those they politically know from their association. As for the recommendation, it is sensible to propose the competency model for the assessor, part of the personnel who will play a significant role in ensuring the selection of the participants. A new persona description has been made based on the assessor's interpretation to select the youth to represent Malaysia.

Keywords: Competency, Youth Exchange Program, Assessor, Credibility;

Abstrak: Dalam proses pemilihan peserta di dalam sesebuah program, kecekapan penilai adalah penting. Kecekapan mencerminkan kualiti atau keadaan seseorang yang mempunyai pengetahuan, pertimbangan, kemahiran atau kekuatan yang mencukupi untuk menggalas tugas mahupun penghormatan tertentu. Tidak dinafikan, ketidakcekapan penilaian juga berlaku apabila penilai berada di luar kapasiti profesional mereka sebagai penilai. Apabila keadaan ini berlaku, ia akan membawa kepada pengaruh pertimbangan peribadi. Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk

menyelidiki kecekapan penilai dalam proses membuat keputusan semasa proses penilaian untuk memilih calon yang akan mewakili Malaysia dalam Program Pertukaran Belia Antarabangsa. Kaedah kajian kualitatif telah dipilih untuk kajian ini. Data dikumpul melalui temu bual mendalam dengan lima bekas penilai Kementerian Belia dan Sukan dan bekas penilai daripada persatuan belia di Malaysia. Memandangkan Malaysia berada di bawah Perintah Kawalan Pergerakan, temu bual dijalankan melalui platform dalam talian seperti Google Meet. Secara keseluruhan, hasil kajian mendapati para penilai adalah cekap dalam mengendalikan tugas sebagai penilai. Tiada unsur diskriminasi jantina yang berlaku semasa proses pemilihan. Namun, kredibiliti penilai daripada Pertubuhan Bukan Kerajaan (NGO) adalah diragui. Hal ini kerana mereka terdedah kepada percanggahan kepentingan terhadap calon yang mereka kenali secara politik daripada persatuan mereka. Cadangan kajian ini adalah wajar untuk Kementerian Belia dan Sukan membuat satu garis panduan atau rubrik kecekapan untuk memilih penilai kerana mereka akan memainkan peranan penting dalam memastikan pemilihan peserta yang berkualiti untuk mewakili Malaysia.

Kata kunci: Kecekapan, Program Pertukaran Belia, Penilai, Kredibiliti;

Introduction

The concept of exchange programs is more than just science and education. There can be variations in the range of programs. Maximova et al. (2018) mentioned that several exchange program categories could be identified. For instance, sociocultural programs' main objectives are to get acquainted with life in the country, learn a foreign language, history, traditions, and customs, and debunk ethnic and national stereotypes and preconceptions. In addition, several participants joined the program to receive formal professional education and conduct scientific research (Maclean & Adamson, 2016). It includes preparing for master's and doctoral dissertations; professional internships directed at receiving practical skills and valuable for undergraduates and young specialists wanting to extend their knowledge and gain experience (Fitzsimmons, Flanagan, & Wang, 2013). Another category of the exchange programs is undertaken in bilateral and multilateral agreements in youth policy and youth work. For example, the programs involve socially active youth with leadership potential, learning and carrying out practically-oriented projects (McIver et al., 2012). Different exchange programs require various institutional and legal mechanisms and practices, conceptualized in different fundamental contexts.

In Malaysia, to be involved in any exchange

program, a person needs to undergo selection. According to Baharun, Awang, & Padlee (2011), all applications received will be reviewed and processed after the given deadline through the selection process. Assessment of the application will be based on the program eligibility requirements and selection criteria of the governing body concerned. There is an exchange program where some of the successful applicants at the early stage must go through the selection camp to represent the university, nation, or country (Universiti Malaysia Sabah, 2021). It is a normal phase faced by the applicants in Malaysia to ensure that the person is/will represent the governing body.

It is understood that it is always in the best interest of a governing body to ensure a reliable and valid selection process. Hardison et al. (2015) affirmed that the selection process is essential to afford three benefits. The three benefits are; first, it assures that those selected are more likely to perform well on the job than those not selected. Next, it allows for a legally defensible process; lastly, it is fair to applicants. Besides, best practices in personnel selection require amassing evidence that each selection tool provides reliable and valid measurements of exchange program applicants. This area comprises any point in a selection process where some people can continue, and some are not is a point where a selection decision is made. Hence, it refers to any judgments, criteria, tests, or scores used to make

those decisions as selection tools. The written test, the interviews, the panel reviews, etcetera are all used as selection tools in this context.

Reliable selection tools are likely to produce identical scores for applicants regardless of where or when the measurement took place or who scored or conducted the test (Baharun, Awang, & Padlee, 2011). Useful selection tools distinguish the applicants who are more likely to succeed in the exchange program (or achieve some other important criterion outcome) from those less likely to be successful. The more valuable a tool, the fewer mistakes it makes when making that distinction. The more valid a tool, the better it is at identifying who would succeed on the job. Thus, the measurements should be stable across time, assuming someone's underlying capabilities have not changed. However, training, acquiring new knowledge, or gaining inexperience could change candidates' underlying capabilities (Hardison et al., 2015).

Before the selection process, a selection panel is a team of members committed to interviewing and selecting a person for a position. The selection panel process is beneficial because it provides varying perspectives, helps to eliminate biases, and benefits the department by involving personnel and applicants in the hiring decision (Gusdorf, 2008). Other than that, all individuals involved in the selection process should be appropriately trained on the steps for interviewing, including developing criteria, reviewing résumés, developing interview questions, and weighing the candidates (Clever, 2016). However, the selection panel's composition will depend on the type of public entity to which an appointment is made. For example, panels may include the Minister, a Minister's delegate, the departmental secretary, other senior departmental staff, Board Chairs, and an independent expert. The composition of the selection panel should be agreed upon by the responsible governance officers and the relevant Minister at the start of the appointment process.

This study is only focusing on the competency of the assessors. Competency lets the assessor view as a dependable source of reliable information and fair, effective decision-making. Based on the general term, competence is the power to inspire belief. It is a critical personal and professional trait because competency defines the assessors. The competency associated with being a good assessor is sorely needed, considering the pivotal importance of judgment and assessment. Therefore, to explore the influence of the selection process, the objective of this study is to determine the competency of the assessor

in the decision-making process during the recruitment to select the candidate to represent Malaysia in the International Youth Exchange Program.

Literature Review

Figure 1. The conceptual framework of the study

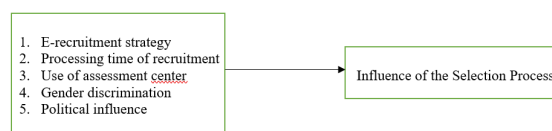


Figure 1 is the study's conceptual framework, which comprises five essential elements that would affect the selection process for the International Youth Exchange Program in Malaysia.

International Youth Exchange Programs

The international youth exchange program is a youth development program that nurtures friendship and mutual understanding among youth from various countries. The program aims to broaden the youth's perspective on the world, foster leadership skills in various fields, and strengthen international cooperation spirit and practical skills for international collaboration. In Malaysia, international youth exchange programs are among the internationalization initiatives that expose Malaysian youth to global networking, knowledge, and skills. This initiative also designs and intensifies youth internationalization programs based on current global scenarios and trends. This initiative is also a platform for youths to highlight their talents and potential through various international programs (Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2016). Youth development in Malaysia is based on the Malaysian Youth Policy (MYP) 2015, which aims to strengthen and highlight youth human capital (Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2015).

Likewise, in the 11th Malaysia Plan, 2016 - 2020 youth development agenda is desired to improve the well-being of youth by developing them to become charismatic, dynamic, and progressive generations (Economic Planning Unit, 2015). Under the purview of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, several international youth exchange programs are co-organized with other ministries or Governments, such as the Cabinet Office of Japan, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family of the Republic of Korea, the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Brunei Darussalam,

and Indonesia and many others. The responsible division to manage all international youth exchange programs under the Ministry's purview is the Youth Development Division, National Youth and Sports Department.

There are two types of international youth exchange programs; long-term (60 days) and short-term (20 days). Both programs involve youth forming a contingent to participate in the programs to represent Malaysia. During the program, participants are constantly stimulated mainly by the variety of activities prepared by the organizers. The activities include educational visits, homestay programs, courtesy calls on the local governors, discussion groups, voluntary activities, solidarity group activities, and national and cultural presentations. The activities were conducted with different and various methods, indoor and outdoor. In addition, given the opportunity for exposure throughout the programs, the participants were actively involved in various interactive activities prepared by the organizer or the participants themselves.

Youth participating in the international exchange programs is being filtered in several stages. The stages include psychometric tests, essay assessments, and selection camps. The first screening process is the psychometric test conducted for youth who applied to join the international youth exchange programs. The Public Service Department (PSD) prepares and analyses the test. This test includes ten traits to measure the personality of youth as identified by the Ministry. The ten traits are; rationale, assertive, tolerance, socially active, systematic, sympathy, expression of feeling, cheerfulness, tranquility, and reliability (Youth Development Division, 2018). The second screening stage is the essay evaluation, whereby the short essay is submitted upon the online application based on the specified theme. The essay will be evaluated by the assessors appointed by the Youth Development Division based on the specific criteria. This screening is for those youth who appear qualified based on the application's information. Gusdorf (2008) claimed that the screening process saves time and expense for both applicants and organizations to go further into the selection process if determined they are unqualified and inappropriate for the post.

After the screening, only a group of selected youth will be called to join the Selection Camp. The Selection Camp is one of the core instruments to evaluate and identify and select the most qualified youth to represent the country in youth exchange programs at the international level. Youth will be

evaluated from all aspects of the discipline, cooperation, communication, leadership, personality, intellectual, and even talent during the whole camp, either while doing activities or during break time, conducted by a group of trainers. The selection camp also held interview sessions for youth interested in The Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program (SSEAYP). The need to conduct this interview session is essential given that the program is a multilateral and long-term international youth exchange program. Therefore, the willingness and availability of youth who want to participate are significant before selection.

The evaluation is performed by a group of assessors appointed by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, comprising selected officers and representatives from the Malaysian Youth Council (MBM) and the international exchange programs alumni associations. The composition of assessors from different backgrounds ensures that youth selection is fair based on discussion and consensus judgment. The outcome from the final stage of the assessment is essential. Thus, the National Youth and Sports Department will have the most eligible youth to participate in the international level program as the characteristics of each program are challenging in terms of the demographic of participants who come from different historical and cultural backgrounds and a different sense of values.

From the above description, the selection process of youths to participate in international exchange programs under the Ministry of Youth and Sports is as important as the recruitment and selection process for a company's employees. Recruitment and selection are two interrelated processes (Bratton & Gold, 2000 and Gamage, 2014). Recruitment generates a pool of qualified youth to apply for participation in programs. At the same time, the selection is the process by which specific instruments are employed to choose from a pool of applicants most suitable for the programs (Bratton & Gold, 2000 and Ofori & Aryeetey, 2011). These two processes consider the Ministry and organizers' goals and requirements, as Bratton & Gold (2007) mentioned. Hence, assessors' credibility is crucial to ensure that they select the right representative not based on their interests. For example, if the selection happened to have a political influence on recruitment, then the selection would lead to political biases or indirect influence. In this sense, selection to appoint the assessor or panel is deemed essential to reduce the incompetence of the assessor or panel.

Selection of the Assessor

Assessors oversee analyzing and recommending which youth are eligible to participate in the international exchange programs. The role of the panel of assessors has a significant association with the quality of assessment outcomes, with the right panel of assessors executing the duty flawlessly and making this selection camp a powerful tool for performing youth selection (Kleinmann & Ingold, 2018). To provide high-quality assessment results for the National Department of Youth and Sports, the assessors must be professional and credible in performing their tasks and functions.

It must be trustworthy and free of any conflicts of interest or other circumstances that could lead to subjectivity in the evaluation. Based on their competence and experience, some officers will be appointed as assessors at the National Department of Youth and Sports level. At the same time, representatives from MBM and alumni organizations are chosen based on nominations from MBM and alumni association top management, respectively. In terms of the interview session, there is a line of assessors made up of members of the same organizations.

Various indoor and outdoor activities, such as debate sessions, group discussions and presentations, outdoor games, and talent displays, are being used to evaluate candidates at the selection camp. The evaluation occurs while the activities are being performed or during a break. As a result, assessors must grasp their position as assessors and each action performed by trainers to facilitate the evaluation process for youth. Assessors must also make a thoughtful review, have good observation skills, and have analytical abilities. In addition, assessors' attitudes toward youth must be reasonable in any situation (Funder, 1995). In other words, assessors in this area must be thoroughly skilled, open-minded, and mature. The criteria mentioned earlier correspond to the personal and general characteristics of the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) accreditation panel of assessors (Malaysian Qualifications Agency, 2021), which states that accreditation panels are appointed based on the type of program to be evaluated and the suitability of the certification panels.

The evaluation process and establishing the evaluation outcome are two different things. First, assessors are evaluated according to the Secretariat's guidelines. The evaluation marks are accumulated at the end of the assessment procedure, and the

Secretariat ranks the performance of youth based on average grades. Second, after the interview session, all the assessors discuss to decide which candidates are genuinely eligible to participate in the SSEAYP program and propose to the National Department of Youth and Sports. The discussion is based on the interview results and the previous exercise's rating. As indicated by Bacon et al. (2017) in their study about assessing the performance of student dietitians during clinical placements, the outcome of the discussion at this stage is based on the consensus judgment among assessors (Bacon et al., 2015 and Bacon et al., 2017). Assessors can reach a consensus in their assessments based on the sharing of appraisal, justification, and dialogue between them (Govaerts et al., 2013 and Bacon et al., 2015) before deciding fairly.

The Integrity of the Assessor

The selection process of youths to participate in international exchange programs under the Ministry of Youth and Sports is as important as the recruitment and selection process for a company's employees. Recruitment and selection are two interrelated processes (Bratton & Gold, 2000) (Gamage, 2014). Recruitment generates a pool of qualified youth to apply for participation in programs. At the same time, the selection is when specific instruments are employed to choose from a pool of applicants most suitable for the programs (Bratton & Gold, 2000) (Ofori & Aryeetey, 2011). These two processes consider the Ministry and organizers' goals and requirements, as Bratton & Gold (2007) mentioned. The quality of the selection depends on the assessment instruments and the integrity of the assessors.

The credibility of an assessor is reflected in their responsibility to carry out the tasks. For example, evaluating youth in the selection process, the credibility of the assessors is vital because the selection of the youth is highly reliant on the assessment's outcome. Thus, the assessors should possess adequate knowledge, attitudes, and skills to carry out their functions and roles well during the whole assessment process (Ali, Shafii, & Shahimi, 2018 and Tahir, 2019). Knowledge relates to understanding and mastery of the substance of accreditation by studying the theoretical and practical dynamics of accreditation. In addition, a code of ethics must govern an assessor's attitude. While the skills are related to how someone uses the accreditation instrument correctly, analyses instruments properly, and follows current criteria, they are also connected to utilizing it (Tahir, 2019).

As for the selection camp's assessment, the assessors must have a wide range of knowledge and experience related to the youth development field, particularly in the youth internationalization domain. Assessors must adequately occupy these features to facilitate evaluating youth's aptitude, personality, abilities, honesty, and motivation in a blend of assessment exercises. Furthermore, it shall produce credible and quality assessment outcomes. The same goes for school accreditation, where having a professional and credible assessor is essential. According to Tahir (2019), the assessors need to have the vision, experience, and commitment to improving the quality of education.

Meanwhile, another study of recruiting Shari'ah auditors in an Islamic banking environment requires personnel to be competent in Shari'ah and audit knowledge. Both situations affirmed that the assessors have attended assessor training and obtained a certificate issued by accredited organizations (Ali, Shafii, & Shahimi, 2018; Tahir, 2019). There are also situations where the assessment used a cross-specialty approach. It is due to a lack of supervisors in the same field as Burm et al. (2019) mentioned in the study assessing clinical residents. According to the findings, the cross-specialty approach has directly impacted supervisors' credibility judgments, and it is challenging to keep that strategy going. The study also indicated that individuals with different fields of expertise could be trained to assess residents in specialties outside their own at pivotal points throughout the residents' training. Based on those three situations, it simply implies having professional and credible assessors for any assessment field. Therefore, any organization involved in the assessment process should conduct a series of training for the prospective assessors to ensure the credible and quality outcome of the assessment.

Another crucial part of being a credible assessor is the judgment after the assessment process because the selection process has an element of subjective evaluation in the assessor. For example, it is related to judgment and subjectivity in assessing health professional competence highlighted in a study (Bacon, Williams, Grealish, & Jamieson, 2015). In this selection camp, an interview session is conducted for the youths interested in participating in the Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program (SSEAYP). Different assessors can attend the interview session with the same combination of organizations. The interview assessment is based on the rating of the previous assessment and specific requirements for this program. The assessors'

credibility is needed to gain consensus and fair judgments at this stage. According to Bacon et al. (2015), dialogue is the best way to reach consensus in assessments and proceed toward a shared understanding of the assessment's performance (Bacon, Williams, Grealish, & Jamieson, 2015). In addition, this is consistent with Govaerts and Van der Vleuten (2013), who urge for an "interpretive community" in which supervisors can clarify the principles and assumptions that underpin their judgments, engage in critical dialogue and reconsider their decisions considering these discussions.

Methodology

This research is a qualitative study using the phenomenological approach that aims to describe, understand, and interpret the meanings of the panel's experiences during the selection process. Based on the in-depth interview with the informants, the researchers have then analyzed the panels' stories, views, and perceptions to determine the panels' reliability in the decision-making process during the recruitment procedure to select the candidate to represent Malaysia for the International Youth Exchange Program. According to Corbin & Strauss (2008), qualitative research allowed researchers to discover participants' inner experiences and determine how culture forms meaning. Hence, a qualitative research approach was more appropriate because it needed to explore the panels' experiences during the selection process to attain the research objectives and questions. In particular, the phenomenology approach was designed to recognize the subjective life experiences and participants' perceptions to discover how the audience changed in terms of attitude, behavior, and life experience. The researchers took one whole day to interview the informants on 06 June 2021 (2.00 pm until 7 pm). The interview was conducted through an online platform, which is Google Meet. An interview session was conducted between 45 to 60 minutes with five informants.

Sample & Population

Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental sampling, was used to select the informants carefully. The informants need to fulfil the requirements set by the researchers. The informant requirements needed for this research are as follows:

1. Two panels representing the Ministry of Youth and Sports
2. Two panels representing the NGO bodies

3. One independent panel
4. Regardless of gender and ethnicity
5. At least two times becoming the panels during the selection process
6. Willingly to join as participants.

Instrumentation

An in-depth interview through semi-structured questions was used as an instrument for data collection. In-depth interviews helped researchers collect participants' interpretations and perspectives on the decision-making process during the recruitment procedure to select the candidate to represent Malaysia for the International Youth Exchange Program. The semi-structured question allows the researcher to evoke more information from the interviewees and freely explore more topics during the interview process.

Data Collection

At first, the interview list of questions was piloted and scrutinized by an external expert. Then, the consent forms were sent out to the informants, and interview sessions were scheduled immediately according to the informants' availability. Besides, this research adopted a one-to-one interview method to collect in-depth information from the informants through the prompt question. The researchers ensured every informant could recall back their memories to provide a more relevant and accurate response throughout the interview. However, the informants can withdraw themselves from the interview session if they think they are unwilling to share further information due to the sensitivity of the information. Fortunately, even though few questions touched on the sensitivity concerning their credibility, the informant is willing to continue the interview session and answer the question calmly. After the interview session, the researchers conducted a close discussion and investigated the informant's transcript. Finally, the researchers collected a detailed transcript of every informant and sent back the transcription to each informant within 24 hours after the interview. This procedure ensures that they agree with the clean transcription and information yet still recall their point during the interview.

Data Analysis

The thematic analysis method was used to analyze the collected data. According to Vaismoradi et al. (2013), thematic analysis is fundamental to qualitative

data analysis because it provides the core skills for executing various qualitative analysis forms. In the first phase, familiarization helped the researchers be acquainted with informants' content without missing information, such as informants' feelings or unconscious behavior. Researchers have familiarized themselves by immersing themselves in the content, and indirectly, the researcher gets the overall view of the whole research. Researchers re-read the content a few times to get familiar with the data. It allows the researchers to determine possible themes and patterns.

Next, the second phase was coding, in which the researchers came out with some ideas about the content of the data and analyzed the exciting part that triggered the researchers (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Then, the researchers started to organize and identify relevant codes to answer the research question in the coding process. During the reviewing stage, themes were added to new codes so that the data could be more supportive and uniform. The collected data will then become more manageable and prove the validity and reliability of this research. According to Kiger and Varpio (2020), the thematic map should be presented during the interview to clearly show how the themes were interdependent and related to the research questions. The researcher repeatedly proofread the entire data set to ensure the created themes meet the criteria. After that, researchers reviewed the created codes by referring to the interview transcript. This stage's purpose was to ensure the codes created have not drifted too far from the data collected and the research question. Moreover, it allowed the researchers to expand the codes into numerous categories based on their initial list. Simultaneously, some of the codes collapsed into each other, and some themes were eliminated. Lastly, a report was ready to produce when the themes were fully established and ready for the final analysis.

Discussion

Based on the criteria of this research, an interview was performed with five informants. The informants were classified as G01 and G02, representing the assessor from the National Youth and Sports Department, NGO1 and NGO2, representing the assessor from the Malaysian Youth Council (MBM) and the international exchange programs alumni associations. In contrast, IP denotes an independent assessor. The informants were assigned a code since their names would not be published to safeguard their privacy.

Figure 2. Themes and sub-themes from qualitative data analysis

Theme	Subthemes
Preliminary	- Recruitment
Eligibility	- Requirement - Experience
Prospect	- Expectation - Impression
Conflict of Interest	- Biasness - Perception

Preliminary

Aligned with the ten personality traits identified by the Ministry of Youth and Sports to assess youths' personalities, all the informants mentioned that it has improved the preliminary process of recruiting potential youths. The ten characteristics are logic, assertiveness, tolerance, social activity, systematicity, compassion, feelings, cheerfulness, serenity, and dependability (Youth Development Division, 2018). According to NGO2, the potential youth will be nominated last time based on their respective association contributions. Hence, only youth actively involved in the society will have the highest chance to represent Malaysia. According to G01, G02 and IP, the revision of the preliminary process is to allow youth from various backgrounds the opportunity to participate. It is also to allow and encourage youth to unleash their potential. According to G01 and IP, youth participating in the international exchange programs are screened at various levels in the preliminary stage.

The phases include a psychometric exam, an essay evaluation, and a selection camp. The initial screening step is a psychometric exam given to youth who have applied to participate in the international youth exchange programs. Based on this preliminary process, it can be concluded that it is a brilliant idea to select the best potential youth at the stipulated time and avoid bureaucracy at the same time. Furthermore, as mentioned in the literature review, according to Gusdorf (2008), the screening procedure saves time and money for both candidates and organizations by preventing them from proceeding further in the selection process if it is found that they are unqualified and unfit for the position.

Eligibility

Based on the interview session, the researchers determined that all the assessors were qualified and met the standards set by the Malaysian Qualifications

Agency (MQA) accrediting panel of assessors. Furthermore, all the assessors (G01, G02, NGO1, NGO2, and IP) have worked for the organization for five years. Government assessors (G01, G02, and IP) must, on the other hand, have a bachelor's degree to be appointed as an assessor or panel. As a result, while the academic qualification of the NGOs assessor is lower than that of the government assessor, their experience in the youth association is extensive. Furthermore, they were one of the association's senior executives. In terms of experience, NGO1 and NGO2 have been actively associated with the youth association for over 15 years. They began as ordinary members and were active in numerous activities until they rose to senior management positions in the relevant organization.

According to Kristiawan and Lian (2019), the more experience someone has, the higher their performance. Therefore, when the National Youth and Sports Department chose an assessor to represent their department, they did not rely just on academic qualifications; experience was also considered. As a result, the researchers discovered that all selected assessors or panels are qualified to be assessors based on their academic qualifications and expertise. Nonetheless, experience is more important than academic credentials alone. Academic credentials are essential, but the extensive experience cannot be overlooked. Someone with a solid intellectual background can see things logically. Nonetheless, depending on their expanded competence, someone may tell deep tales, develop their personalities, and construct a good view of life as they know it via experiences. Furthermore, particular life events elicit genuine emotions and empathy, rapidly bringing thoughts to the surface.

Prospect

The assessors have many expectations throughout the selection process. In the case of G01, the assessor will focus more on the candidate's attitude. G01 defined attitude as managing a stressful situation with diplomacy that requires a high tolerance level. The chosen participant would meet with representatives from various nations during the program. As a result, they have a great chance of provoking a Malaysian representative about a current topic in Malaysia. The topic may be sensitive at times. As a result, if the applicant has a poor tolerance for coping with the provocation question, it indicates someone's attitude or behavior. Researchers discovered that G02 has the same notion as G01. However, G02 will also consider

the candidate's personality. G02 will evaluate a person's ability to be responsible, compassionate, and unspoiled while discussing personality. G02 is seen as untainted since someone is doing something because he or she is not being examined. However, it originates from the empathy that he or she possesses. Like NGO1, NGO2, and IP, assessors generally agree on someone's attitude and behavior based on their experience as assessors for many years. As a result, they can identify individuals doing something because they have been examined or are truthful. G02, NGO2, and IP said that all assessors would generally have a group conversation before giving the marks to discuss the possible candidates to ensure that the marks were competent and fair.

However, it varies from NGO1 because NGO1 will be more concerned with looks. Even though NGO1 was provided with a rubric as a grading tool to analyze applicants throughout the selection process, as experienced well in the youth association, appearance is the crucial factor for NGO1. According to NGO1, a good-looking individual would get much attention. Nonetheless, NGO1 emphasizes that, while education is essential, no one will be drawn to that individual if they do not look lovely. As a result, NGO1 stated that excellent looks and appearance must come first since knowledge may be established. IP argues against the notion that physical attractiveness is the most vital factor to evaluate. Knowledge, according to IP, is essential, and looks can be cultivated. According to IP, the Ministry of Youth and Sports is looking for a charismatic young person to represent all of Malaysia's youth. Furthermore, the IP's position is aligned with G01 and G02. According to the data, researchers discovered that NGO2 had nearly the same thoughts as NGO1. However, according to NGO2, a persona cannot be determined objectively by looking at their looks or someone beautiful. A persona, according to NGO2, might be objectified "at first glance." How that individual carries himself or herself is essential. The way they speak and how they mingle and adapt to the situations. Someone who has a persona does not necessarily have to meet the beauty standards but instead focuses on personality.

The criterion takes no account of a person's physical size or attractiveness. Furthermore, the researchers discovered no evidence of gender prejudice throughout the screening procedure. Candidates are advised to be "themselves" rather than try to be someone else. According to Zulkefli et al. (2021), various approaches to communication ethics may be implemented in interpersonal communication and others, such as a dialogic viewpoint, which means

looking for someone who articulates the argument effectively looking for someone who has a good-looking appearance. They must be sent in a package. As a result, researchers determine that the prospect investigated by the assessor is sound. However, when grading the applicant, they (assessors) must verify that they are in the "golden mean." It is because everyone has their own set of strengths and shortcomings. As a result, to build a good contingent, everyone must embrace everything.

Conflict of Interest

Researchers found that, initially, most of the assessors were competent. However, besides being professional during the selection process, a conflict of interest (COI) exists during the selection process. According to G01 and G02, conflict of interest occurs among NGO assessors because they are biased toward those that they know personally in their association. Therefore, this kind of COI is considered a loophole in the selection process. The opportunity seems to be given to the people politically known by the assessor. Therefore, they (NGO assessors) know them (the candidates), and the tendency to overlook the other potential candidate is high. NGO1 and NGO2 said that chances are given to the people the assessor recognizes are a reward for their hard work in the youth association. In addition, this is a platform for them to go beyond. Hence, they will contribute more to the association when they return from the program. Besides, NGO2 affirmed that most NGO assessors know their limits. Therefore, they hope the candidate they recognize will be selected for the suitable program concerning their ability.

IP seems to agree with NGO1 and NGO2. According to IP, if one of the NGO assessors is at par with the other candidate. Thus, it should not be a big problem. IP justified that, in future, it will be much easier. For example, if anything happens, such as discipline or health issues or other matters, the National Youth and Sports Department can contact the responsible association. Further discussion will be carried out. IP also stern that this is a rare case where the politically recognized candidate will be selected because every assessor needs to justify their marks as either too low or high before entering the system. Undeniably, conflicts of interest are a common issue. "It is whom you know, not what you know", and this statement refers to what has been said by NGO1. Based on the justification by NGO1 and NGO2, also supporting statements by IP, researchers can conclude that conflicts of interest are not necessarily unethical

until someone acts on them. Nevertheless, avoiding conflicts of interest is necessary because otherwise, other corrupt and unethical acts, such as fraud or bribery. To rectify this, the researchers believe that transparency (being completely open and honest) becomes essential when dealing with actual and potentially perceived conflicts of interest. Perception happens when a person observes something (behavior or activity) and concludes. Perception of a conflict of interest does not make it a conflict of interest. The actual test of whether a matter is only a potentially perceived conflict of interest or an actual conflict of interest is disclosed.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The recruitment process to select the most eligible candidates to participate in the International Youth Exchange Programs is dependent on the assessors' judgment from the assessment process. For the selection to have an excellent output, assessors must be fully competent and credible, disregarding the landscape or background of candidates. An analysis of prior literature revealed that the required competency of the assessors has not yet been established. It is challenging to recruit assessors who have academic qualifications, vast experience in youth internationalization, and are free from any inclination. Nevertheless, it is prominent to note that the assessors selected are competent enough to perform their duties in summarizing the findings.

Nonetheless, the credibility of NGO assessors is questioned because they are vulnerable to the conflicts of interest of individuals they know politically. Moreover, on top of the current selection criteria, the assessors describe the "persona" of participants during the assessment process. Hence, it is timely to propose the competency model for the assessor, part of the personnel who will play a significant role in ensuring the selection of the participants. Besides that, the selection module also needs to be reviewed periodically to ensure it aligns with the current trend and participants' eligibility. Furthermore, the preliminary assessment process could be enhanced in numerous stages. For example, the application system includes the item "recommendation by the association represented by the youth." It is for applicants who represent any of the youth associations or clubs. It will be a valuable addition to the selection camp's assessment standards. It is also for youth organizations to encourage more young people to apply in the future. In other words, there will be a large pool of applications from diverse backgrounds

and be good enough a candidate to participate in the program. The preliminary assessment is the best method to screen suitable candidates to join the program before assessment at the following levels.

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