

Upsc and pmr examinations should be abolished essay sample

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Education is an ongoing and continuous process to develop knowledge, skills, mores and norms. Napoleon Hill states that education comes from your within, you get it by struggle, effort and thought. According to the Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus, the word examination can be defined as the process of assigned or being responsible for marking, assessing testing and evaluating capability of a candidate according to the standards set by the Ministry. Meanwhile, the term abolishment brings denotation the act of destroying completely a practice or a system. Nowadays, we could find students are studying only for their exams. Hence, the Education director General, Tan Sri Aliimuddin Md Dom said that the countrys education system has been too exam oriented and change should be made immediately to make the National Education Philosophy is effective enough in human capital development. Thus, the government has made a proposal to the public that UPSR and PMR should be abolished and examinations are being replaced with school based assessments. As government made the proposal, many voices are heard as there are different perspectives and opinions from the public as this abolishment has both pros and cons. First and foremost, Moreover, students do not have enough time to play or to involve in extra co-curricular activities. Students are being pressured by their parents to keep study all the time, thus they become human robots soon. We do not want nerdy students who stick to books and too rigid. In contrary, we want all-rounders, those students who excel both in curriculum and co-curriculum.

Without both UPSR and PMR examinations, students could possibly have ample time to spend for outdoor and leisure activities without hesitation.

Bernamas reports have shown that examinations prevent students from focusing on outdoor activities such as sports as they burn midnight oil, study day and night to pass the exams. With a single public examination, which is SPM, the teachers and students are able to give more attention and focus on how to improve creativity, interaction between educators and learners and involve in co-curricular activities and sports. The actual purpose, goal and target of education has been discarded and neglected. On the other hand, some parties still agree to the proposal. They feel that examinations are merely heavy burden upon students. Students and parents are only concerned on the number of As they obtain in exams. Parents will reprimand their kids severely if they fail to pass their exams with flying colors and even neglected them when they did not get many As. Thus, kids undergo depression and stress. In addition, examination only made the students to study blindly day and night. Normally, students will race to see who got the highest marks and the first rank, but they failed to see the real purpose of education. Education without values, as useful it is, seems rather to make a man to become a more clever devil (C. S. Lewis, n. d.). Hence, we fail to achieve the goal of education. It is not necessary when you score straight As in exams, you are smart enough. With examinations, it is impossible to achieve holistic education in our country, where students stand a chance to develop both knowledge, application of knowledge and nurturing of moral values. And this abolishment of public examinations is a part of governments plan to restructure the Malaysian Education System. In addition, public examinations are being replaced with school based assessments.

These assessments are helpful for teachers in evaluating students performance and to test their depth of understanding in the subject matter. Examinations are nightmares and seem to be threatening for students, as they feel really depressed and tensed. Examinations are supposed to be fun for students, but there is no use of having it when it cause too much of sufferings for students. Schools are only concerned about the top scorers, while parents just rely on number of As their children get. I believe this is unhealthy as this scenario cause a lot of negative impacts later on. In the contrary, teachers totally disagree to the abolishment as they find students will lose their interest to study in school. In UPSR, students will master all the basic skills such as mathematics, languages and science in the primary level. Meanwhile, PMR is the medium for them to learn in depth advance levels of tabulating data, statistics, life sciences and so on. If public examinations are abolished, students will lose the chance to learn to master all these skills. Sociologists argue that UPSR and PMR are the stepping stones for the students towards their biggest examination, SPM. Students did only study when they are being forced and put in pressure. Unless they have exams ahead, they will be very lazy to study. I believe that students will face great difficulties when they step to Form Five as they have to cram everything at the eleventh hour.

One year is not enough to learn all the subjects and this affects grades and achievement. Assuredly, their performance would be not so good if they study at the very last minute. Teachers also feel that Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR) is an important tool to measure students capability re stream students either to Science Stream or Arts Stream because it is impossible for

all the students to be in the same stream and study comparative subjects as every students ability, and choice differs. Besides, politicians and experts in education field states their disagreement to this as they feel that this existing examination system is vital as it plays role as indicator in measuring levels of achievement of each and every student. Sabah DAP, Dr Hiew King Cheu is against the termination of the UPSR and the PMR examinations. He made a media statement that this termination should be stopped as soon as possible to avoid risking our precious future generations. In my view, I feel that this abolishment will reduce competition level between learners and will have impact upon drastic drop at quality of education. Furthermore, examinations are meant for enhancing better grades and results for the purpose of worldwide recognition. Furthermore, the league tables and private tutors are afraid that if this termination occurs, they will be less job opportunities. Those who are owners of tuition centers will lose their business gain and income as those students in primary and lower secondary level would not have a single thought to attend tuition classes, home tuitions and so on.

They would prefer to have leisure activities and priority is not given for their studies. When the number of students who attend tuition classes is declining, the private tutors will lose their job and income. I strongly agree that unless students have public examinations ahead, they will be scared of losing marks and try their level best to attend extra tuition classes to enrich their knowledge and excel in their studies. In my opinion UPSR and PMR should not be abolished as it has great negative impacts on students, teachers and also not to forget, the Malaysian Education System. This termination will

create great chaos in the country as many feel that it is inappropriate enough for the students not to have examinations at primary level and lower secondary level. The government was advised to discuss in depth with experts of education fields, school administrators and higher officers of Ministry of Education so that a good decision can be made. Two heads are always better than one. And now, the Government has officially declared that UPSR and PMR would not be abolished, but at the same time, other plans and strategies would be carried out to fulfill the purpose of education according to the Ninth Malaysian Plan in Mission 2020. So, the abolishment has been eliminated and all the schools are required to prepare their students to sit for public examination according to National Education Policy 1961.

Commentary: Should UPSR & PMR be abolished? Introduction The proposal to abolish UPSR and PMR, two public examinations which most of us [especially the current generation] have come to recognize as being almost central to our education system, has generated much controversy and discussion ± with opposing sides of the heated debate raising very persuasive and solid arguments. For references sake, this essay will first provide a brief explanation as to what these examinations are. The UPSR and PMR are examination-based assessments taken at the end of a students primary and lower secondary education respectively, with the goal of assessing ones academic progress for the corresponding level of education. Outlining the Debate

The chief criticism of the current education system is that it is simply too examinationoriented and leaves no room for a more holistic and well-rounded development. The governments main reason for proposing the abolishment of UPSR and PMR is an attempt to address exactly that. The rationale for doing away with two of our education systems most important examinations is so that we can move away from an examinationoriented system. Needless to say, such a controversial move has raised many objections, which may be summarized in two broad grounds: Firstly, that with UPSR and PMR no longer in place, we would lack an objective method for assessing a students academic progress. It has been argued with considerable force, that students studying in rural-area schools with fewer facilities and resources, would especially stand to lose out to their urban-area counterparts as these examinations, at the very least, form an objective goal that they can focus their efforts on and strive to achieve in order to compete with students in the urban areas. Secondly, a natural consequence that follows from the first reason, students would lack motivation to perform in their studies. To quote a commentator:

³The only reason why students study is precisely because they need to pass an examination, and schools without examinations will soon cease to exist.’ Having outlined the main arguments from both ends of the debate, this essay will now proceed to present its own opinion in a three-part analysis. It will ultimately draw the conclusion that at this stage in time, neither UPSR nor PMR should be abolished, for the reason that abolishing these two examinations does not necessarily provide an effective way of moving away from an examination-oriented system. However, it will also go on to argue

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that the reasons raised in favour of retaining these examinations ± that one would lack an objective method of assessment and a source of motivation for students to perform well in school are fundamentally flawed in substance and more importantly, fail in principle to address the crux of the issue. In essence, this essay agrees that UPSR and PMR should not be abolished but disagrees with the mainstream rationale submitted by fellow commentators.

What Happens if We Abolish UPSR and PMR?

This essay submits that the merits of a proposal should be evaluated using a three-stage analysis. Firstly, it will assess the extent to which the proposal solves the problem that it is intended to solve. Secondly, it will proceed to examine the issue of any additional consequences that the proposal could possibly give rise to, and thirdly, if so, whether any possible negative consequences may be justified by the benefits such a proposal might offer.

(i) To what extent is abolishing UPSR/PMR solving the problem? Does this move really fulfil our objective in moving away from an examination-oriented education system? This essay would like to argue that doing away with these two examinations does not necessarily signify a departure from a focus on examination-based assessments. For starters, there will still be tests and examinations conducted at school-level ± that much is certain. More importantly, however, it should be stressed that, contrary to popular belief, the underlying concern is not so much about the existence of the examinations, but rather what the teachers do in the classrooms. The main stinging point of the fundamental criticism of our education system is that students spend too much time at school mugging for exams by memorizing

facts and regurgitating them on past-year papers, and not the fact that the final assessments are conducted in the form of an examination.

One must take heed not to fall into the trap of this common misconception. While it is true that having an examinations-based form of assessment contributes significantly to the problem today, it is far from being the be-all-and-end-all to this matter. This essay submits that change must come not only from the form of final assessment, but also the shape of the curriculum and how teaching is conducted. Not having an examination-oriented education system does not necessarily entail having a system that places relatively minor emphasis on examinations. It is entirely possible to have an assessment that gives, say, a comparatively heavy 80% weightage to a final examination and 20% weightage to other holistic components, while having a teaching system that incorporates the development of critical thinking, creativity, and teamwork. To return to the question, no, the abolishment of UPSR and PMR does not per se solve the problem of our examination-oriented system. Removing these exams may be helpful in taking a step towards the right direction, but the biggest change required is in the classroom. Other measures, such as changes in the teaching approach and curriculum must accompany the move to abolish these examinations, if this proposal is to have any positive effect. Otherwise, we would be in a position where we would have a 'wellrounded' assessment scheme, but be stuck with an inadequate teaching method that fails to address the needs of the system. (ii) What other consequences might there be?

The answer to this question has been conveniently provided and elaborated by the opposers of the proposal. The abolishment of these examinations would leave us with no objective method of assessing a students academic performance in school. This means that certain academically-elite secondary schools which typically depend on UPSR and PMR results for admission purposes would be left without a way of deciding which students to admit. More importantly, without PMR, there would now be difficulties in the streaming process ± the sorting of students into the science and arts streams at upper secondary level would be impossible. Students of rural areas, being confined to their schools with poorer facilities and fewer resources, would stand to lose out in the long run, without a centralized benchmark which they can focus their efforts on and work towards achieving. This is a very powerful consequential argument for opposing the proposal, but this essay contends that it is unfortunately not entirely flawless. It is flawed because it can easily be countered. The problem of having a way to distinguish academically sound students from the weaker ones for streaming or admission purposes can easily be solved by requiring the schools in question to conduct independent assessments of their own ± a good example would be to carry out their own admissions or aptitude tests. Doing so would have the advantage of providing a more tailored way to handpick students based on an individual schools capabilities and corresponding standards.

The objection that rural-area students would be harmed by this proposal is also unconvincing. The truth is, there is more than enough criticism that rural students are losing out in our current system as it is, simply due to the

state of facilities and resources available to the schools in rural areas. The fact that we have had to controversially lower the passing grade threshold in our public examinations in order to allow more students to pass already speaks volumes about how the examination system in principle is not incredibly friendly to the rural-area students who statistically tend to produce lower scores in exams. The problem of the rural-area students must be addressed using other measures; it has little to do with an examination-based assessment. Another submitted consequence is that without examinations in place, students would lack motivation to work hard and perform well in school. Without UPSR and PMR, it would be pointless going to school.

As with the argument about the rural-area students, this appears to be a rather ancillary objection. The government has already made it clear that there will be another form of assessment in place of UPSR and PMR, though the exact details are still hazy as of now. Students will still be assessed in some way, even if more holistic components will be incorporated into the assessment scheme, so there should not be an issue of a lack of motivation. Lastly, it should be noted that many students who are not motivated to put effort into their schoolwork are likely to have the same attitude regardless of the type of final assessment anyway. All in all, however, this essay acknowledges the merits of having a centralized, objective way of assessing a students achievements, and there is no denying that having an examination can be a major source of motivation for students. However, the point this essay is trying to make is that while these consequence-based arguments are persuasive in their own right, they immediately lose a lot of

their initial punch once countered and are secondary in comparison to an objection that is based on whether the abolishment of UPSR/PMR does what it is supposed to do. (iii) Can the advantages justify the disadvantages?

We have explored the possible benefits of the proposal in part (i) and its potential drawbacks in part (ii). It has been seen that, upon closer examination, much of the reasoning backing the mainstream objections carry a lot less bite than their bark. On the other hand, one would also be hard-pressed to say that the abolishment would do much to solve the problem of an examination-oriented education system. Ultimately, however, the fact that it does not do what it is supposed to do, and the fact that without additional measures [in terms of a change in teaching approach and curriculum] to complement and support the abolishment would yield no results, supply good enough reasons to oppose the proposal. Conclusion

On its own, the abolishment of UPSR and PMR does not solve the problems inherent of an examination-oriented system. This fact alone should be able to provide a solid basis to oppose the move to abolish the exams, at least until the government rolls out concrete and clear-cut plans on the next step to be taken. This essay would like to reiterate that the biggest and most important change should, in principle, first be done in the teaching approach and curriculum; we can then decide on what to do with our assessments schemes after that. There are also powerful consequence-based reasons challenging the abolishment, but on their own, they do not provide a sufficiently strong case for going against the abolishment. It is only by proving that the proposal does not accomplish what it is supposed to

accomplish that we may have a solid reason for choosing the opposing stance.