

TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING THROUGH LIBERAL EDUCATION: INSIGHTS FROM A MALAYSIAN UNIVERSITY CASE STUDY

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Abstract

This paper investigates the design and implementation of liberal education, known as Citra-UKM Education, a curriculum initiative by Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia aimed at advancing the national agenda of cultivating intellectually agile human capital. Informed by the Malaysia Education Blueprint (Higher Education), the curriculum adopts a flexible, inclusive, and multidisciplinary approach to undergraduate education. It is designed to equip undergraduates with a broad spectrum of knowledge and essential soft skills responsive to the evolving demands of the job market. This paper deliberates on the concept that underpins the development and implementation of Citra-UKM Education and presents the findings of the survey on students' perspectives of the curriculum. A total of 297 undergraduate students, who enrolled in Citra-UKM Education courses, participated in the survey. The findings reveal students' strong level of endorsement that highlights the significance and effectiveness of the liberal education elements integrated within the Citra-UKM Education. This paper offers insights into its relevance in a posthumanist era of educational transformation.

Keywords: Liberal education; posthumanism; multidisciplinary curriculum; Malaysian higher education; soft skills; curriculum reform

INTRODUCTION

Liberal education, also known as “liberal arts” or “general education”, has been prevalent in many countries like Russia, Ghana, Israel, the Netherlands, Chile, and Brazil for several decades. Interestingly, its presence is more significant in the Asian region such as India, China, Hong Kong, Bangladesh. Liberal education encompasses (1) interdisciplinary field of study providing a broad knowledge base of social science, humanities, and sciences; (2) a “general education” protocol or compulsory courses or curriculum; and (3) transferable skills which incorporate written and oral communication, analysis and synthesis, problem solving, information and quantitative literacy, reasoning or logic, critical thinking, creativity, citizenship/social responsibility/ethics, global competence, and/or student-centeredness and holistic student development (Godwin, 2015).

Fox (2018) contends that despite the evolving significance of general education within the broader liberal education paradigm in the 21st century, its traditional framework—shaped by post-World War II ideologies—has largely remained unchanged amidst profound global, technological, and societal transformations. Fox further argues that while general education has long aimed to cultivate critical thinking, civic responsibility, and intellectual breadth, its structure and implementation often fall short of these goals. A more integrated, interdisciplinary approach that emphasizes intellectual engagement, ethical reasoning, and real-world application is deemed pivotal especially in current context. Therefore, it is important to adapt liberal education to contemporary challenges, including globalization, digital transformation, and the need for lifelong learning.

In Malaysia, liberal education is developed to enhance students' social responsibility, intellectual skills and soft skills which include communication, analytical and problem solving along with the ability to apply knowledge and skills in the real world. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), a public university in Malaysia, has established its very own Liberal Education curriculum named Citra-UKM Education. It is specifically designed to provide a flexible, inclusive and multidisciplinary approach that allows its undergraduate students to learn a wide spectrum of knowledge and possess diverse soft skills to fulfill the demands of the job market. This initiative corresponds with the national mission to produce human capital with first-class minds. Guided by the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (Higher Education) - MEB (HE) henceforth-, the curriculum emphasizes moral values, history and social responsibility; communication and analytical skills; appreciation of art and culture, and management skills.

The commencement of Citra-UKM Education is timely and strategic given the concerns raised by the government, stakeholders, employers and industries regarding university graduates' marketability which highly depends on their communication skills, thinking skills as well as leadership capability. This duly corresponds with the Ministry of Higher Education's vision to focus specifically on Liberal Education and multi-disciplinary courses in order to fulfill the demands of the human resource sector and produce future graduates who are highly skilful and competitive within the domestic as well as international job market.

This paper deliberates on the concept that underpins the development and implementation of Citra-UKM Education and the impact of the curriculum on the undergraduate students.

Development of Liberal Education or Citra-UKM Education

Prior to the introduction of Citra-UKM Education, the university had been offering general education courses which were administered by the Centre for General Studies. Given the intense demand to produce a highly skilled, flexible and knowledgeable human resource with a holistic mind set forth by the employers, there is a need to reform the general studies to a more extensive and sustainable learning approach as offered by the existing Citra-UKM Education.

The reform Citra-UKM Education from general studies takes into consideration several rationales that include (i) the recommendations by the Ministry of Higher Education on the need for higher learning institutions to give emphasis on liberal and multidisciplinary education in all academic programmes; (ii) UKM's aspiration to produce graduates majoring in various field of studies with a wide spectrum of general knowledge whilst possessing soft skills in order to fulfill the demands of the job market; (iii) the advancement of soft-skills courses offered by higher learning institutions in order to produce human capitals who are highly creative and innovative to overcome the challenges in the society; (iv) the feedback from the stakeholders and society at large in the continuous improvement of the existing curriculum in order to ensure the quality of graduates produced by the university; and (v) the national aspiration as advocated in the Higher Education National Strategic Plan and National Education Philosophy as stated below:

n line with the second core of the National Mission, the country needs to produce human capital with first class minds in order to face challenges in the economic development based on knowledge and innovation. Human capital raised should possess knowledge, skills and outstanding personal characteristics. Relevant to the aims of the intended human capital, the National Higher Education Strategic Plan is created with a vision to transform higher education within the context to make Malaysia an excellent hub for international higher education. This transformation is set as the basis for a glorious and sustainable higher education beyond 2020.

evertheless, it is important to note that the term 'liberal' has raised various debatable perspectives and concerns amongst the locals particularly those in the higher learning institutions. The term 'liberal' in this particular context does not mean 'loose' or 'wide' giving the idea that knowledge is neither rigid, nor ineffective. Instead, the term 'liberal' as embedded in Citra-UKM Education refers specifically to the liberation of knowledge which brings about the notion that students can specialize in not only just one field of study but they can also master a wide scope of knowledge and skills concurrently. The word 'Citra' is a Malay word which resembles varieties, thus it coincides with the idea of liberation of knowledge as instilled in Liberal Education. Hence, the notion of Liberal Education that is applied accentuates on the elements of multiple skills and competencies that are closely associated with a wide spectrum of knowledge that are useful for overall development of students' personality and skills. In this regard, Citra-UKM Education particularly aims to expand students' knowledge beyond their specific area of specialization as well as developing their intellectual capability and their social competence.

The Underpinning Concept of Citra-UKM Education

The fundamental essence underpinning the concept of Citra-UKM Education comprises holistic education that spreads out across various disciplines. Such an approach allows individual students to master not only their own field of studies but also to possess a wide spectrum of knowledge and skills before entering the job market. Underpinning the Citra-UKM Education are a combination of general studies subjects and six interrelated domains which include (1) Ethics, Civilization and Citizenship; (2) Language, Literacy and Communication; (3) Quantitative and Qualitative Reasoning; (4) Science, Technology and Sustainability; (5) Leadership, Entrepreneurship and Innovation; and (6) Family, Health and Lifestyle. This is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

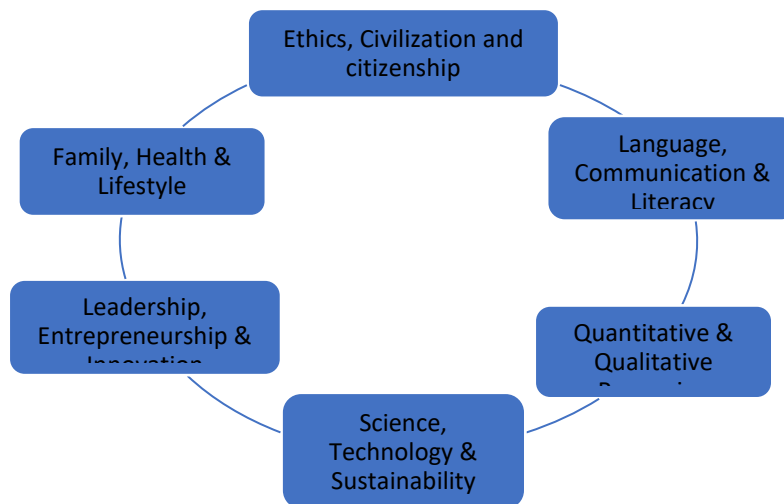


Figure 1: Six Domains of Citra-UKM Education

Each element of the six domains of Citra-UKM Education interrelates with all the others. Domain Ethics, Civilisation and Citizenship stands as the primary component which provides the core values in Citra-UKM Education. This is due to the fact that students need to be given sufficient input and exposure on the aspects of values, integrity, citizenship, and civilisation to develop their identity and strong personality. The core component is substantiated by skills-competencies domain encompassing (i) Language, Communication & Literacy; (ii) Leadership, Entrepreneurship, & Innovation; and (iii) Qualitative & Quantitative Reasoning that are essential in developing human civilization. These main components are complemented by application in life consisting Family, Health & Lifestyle alongside Science, Technology & Sustainability. This particular component provides opportunities for students to attain knowledge and skills necessary in family life and community within the growth of science and technology while sustaining human civilization. Figure 2 exhibits the case in point.

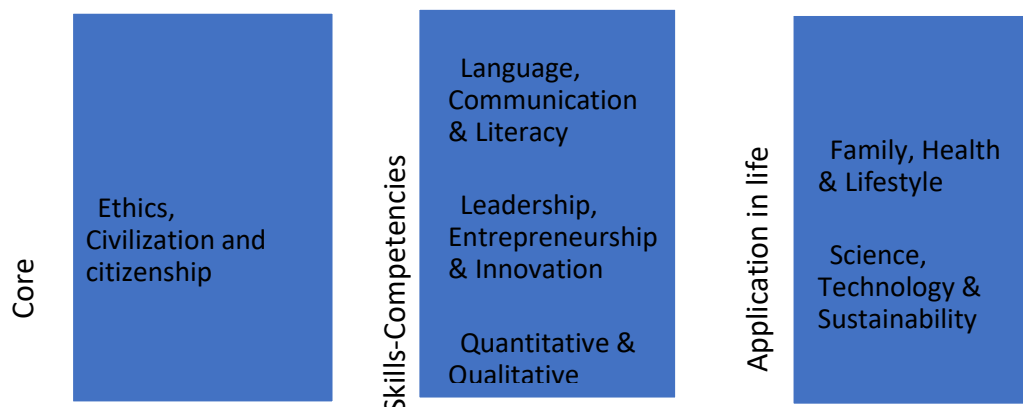


Figure 2: Components of Citra-UKM Citra Education

Citra-UKM Education, as a whole, offers a holistic learning approach that is inclusive and flexible in line with its goal of shaping the students' mind and building their character. Hence, this leads to a unique self-identity and branding for Citra-UKM students. It is important to note that the objectives of Citra-UKM Education include the followings:

- i. To produce graduates who have the personality, which represents the notion of Citra-UKM (liberal education), integrity and soft-skills that can fulfil the current and future needs;
- ii. To ensure that the graduates obtain a holistic education so that they can be independent and adaptable to the constantly changing environment;
- iii. To produce graduates who are competent, competitive, agile towards fulfilling the demands of the workforce;
- iv. To produce graduates who are able to become global citizens, who are able to work in groups and possess the skills of cross-cultural communication;
- v. To produce graduates who not only have the knowledge in their fields of expertise, but also the knowledge in other fields that can give some added value to their self-development and career paths;
- vi. To produce graduates who are ethical and have the integrity as a human, worker and citizen.

The Implementation of Citra-UKM Education

For non-professional academic programmes, Citra-UKM Education comprises a total of 40 credit hours. In contrast, professional programmes require 30 credit hours. These credit allocations are derived from a combination of courses proposed by the General Studies Centre and the respective faculties. The final approval and validation of these courses are carried out by the Citra-UKM Education Taskforce Committee, ensuring alignment with institutional objectives and interdisciplinary learning outcomes.

To ensure the comprehensive development of Citra-UKM Education, the Committee undertook an in-depth study to explore the conceptual foundations and practical implementation of liberal education across 22 universities, both within Malaysia and internationally. This study was conducted primarily through online research methodologies.

In addition to the review, the committee engaged in extensive consultations with key academic stakeholders. These efforts included visits to all university faculties, the organization of workshops involving students and academic staff at UKM, and the administration of both field-based and online surveys. Moreover, a series of structured engagement sessions were held with a diverse range of stakeholders, including students, alumni, lecturers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), industry representatives, government agencies, and parents. These collaborative efforts were instrumental in shaping a well-informed and contextually relevant framework for the evolution of Citra-UKM Education at UKM.

Challenges of Higher Education Curriculum

Higher Education in Malaysia has developed rapidly and steadily these few decades. In the past ten years, the number of student's enrolment has notably accelerated. In line with the global recognition that has stood out in various aspects such as research findings and publications, patents, and institutions quality as well as the sudden increase in the number of international students. This situation necessitates higher education to move away from the conventional teaching and learning approach to a more flexible approach in the provision of future graduates to fulfill the demands of a variety of job opportunities in the local as well as international market. In 2013, in order to reinforce Higher Education in the country, the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) advocated the MEB 2015-2025 (HE). The blueprint sets down the ministry's aspiration in higher education which incorporates three aspects governing the quality of (i) higher learning institutions, (ii) graduates and (iii) the entire higher education system. The ministry hopes to increase the rate of the marketability of the graduates to more than 80% in 2025. Concurrently, it is necessary to enhance students' learning experience by increasing university collaboration with the industries in the curriculum design and delivery of an academic programme, emphasizing on experiential learning and service-based learning to boost relevant skills that are required in the 21st century whilst utilising technology to increase teaching and learning process that is customised towards students' individual needs which specifically relates to personalised learning. To realize the aspiration of MEB, the following needs to be taken into consideration:

- i. Designing integrated cumulative grade point average (CGPA) to evaluate the students' achievement holistically, with entrepreneurial characteristics and all balanced. The new system not only assess knowledge and thinking

skills (as the present practice), but also other main attributes including that of students' aspirations; ethics and spiritual; leadership skills, national identity; and language mastery; and

ii. Creating opportunities for students to master entrepreneurial skills and taking sabbatical leave, industrial attachments, business incubators and special pathways to business ventures by students.

MEB (HE) outlines 10 strategic shifts that serve as the core pillars for transforming Malaysia's higher education system.. These shifts aim to elevate the quality, accessibility, and global competitiveness of the higher education landscape in Malaysia. The shifts incorporate the followings

- 1) Holistic, Entrepreneurial, and Balanced Graduates - focuses on producing well-rounded individuals with strong ethics, leadership, and entrepreneurial mindsets.
- 2) Talent Excellence aims to attract, develop, and retain top academic and administrative talent in higher education institutions.
- 3) Nation of Lifelong Learners encourages continuous learning beyond formal education, supporting adult learners and upskilling.
- 4) Quality Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Graduates - enhances the quality and perception of TVET to meet industry demands.
- 5) Financial Sustainability seeks to diversify funding sources and improve financial management in higher education institutions.
- 6) Empowered Governance promotes greater autonomy and accountability for institutions to drive performance.
- 7) Innovation Ecosystem strengthens research, development, and commercialization to foster innovation.
- 8) Global Prominence positions Malaysia as an international education hub by improving institutional rankings and attracting global talent.
- 9) Globalized Online Learning expands access through high-quality online and blended learning platforms.
- 10) Transformed Higher Education Delivery reimagines how education is delivered, emphasizing flexibility, technology, and student-centered approaches.

In the development of Malaysia's higher education curriculum, emphasis is placed on fostering national unity and a strong sense of patriotism, reflective of the country's unique multicultural context. Central to this objective is the cultivation of an understanding of national aspirations, mastery of the national language, and the shaping of graduates who are globally competent yet distinctly Malaysian in identity. These graduates are envisioned as individuals of high moral standing, fully committed to the peace and well-being of their families, communities, nation, and the global society. To advance this vision, values-based elements have been systematically embedded through general studies and co-curricular programmes. These initiatives—spanning sports, civic engagement, and service learning—aim to develop socially responsible, community-oriented individuals who are prepared to contribute meaningfully to society.

In delivering the academic programmes, higher learning institutions are encouraged to adopt pedagogical approaches that are grounded in research, student-centred, and enriched by the integration of information and communication technology as instructional tools. The implementation of High-Impact Educational Practices (HIEPs)—including experiential learning and service-learning—is particularly pertinent to cultivating both national unity and 21st-century competencies among students. These approaches align with the strategic thrusts of the MEB 2015–2025 (HE), which emphasizes innovative, inclusive, and transformative teaching and learning practices.

In the ongoing development of Malaysia's higher education curriculum, there is a growing emphasis on fostering an educational environment that promotes shared values, mutual understanding, and collective aspirations. This approach seeks to nurture individuals who not only excel academically but also embody ethical integrity and civic consciousness. Aligned with the student aspirations outlined in the MEB (HE), higher learning institutions aim to cultivate key attributes among students which include ethical and spiritual strength, leadership capabilities, national identity, proficiency in languages, and mastery of knowledge. These attributes are considered essential in shaping holistic graduates who possess intellectual maturity, moral integrity, and cultural awareness. Such graduates are envisioned as noble individuals who reflect Malaysia's identity while contributing meaningfully to the broader global society. They are prepared to uphold peace and well-being within their families, communities, and the nation, and to engage responsibly on a universal scale.

The MOHE acknowledges that today's generation is confronted with unprecedented global challenges, including economic instability and climate change. In this regard, higher learning institutions must equip students with relevant knowledge and technical competencies that enable them to navigate these complexities effectively.

Beyond technical proficiency, emphasis should also be placed on cultivating resilience and the capacity for ethical decision-making. Accordingly, the higher education system must be strategically positioned to develop graduates who are capable of addressing both present and emerging global challenges with integrity, adaptability, and informed judgment.

Addressing Future Workforce Demands through Transformative Higher Education

Recent findings from the Malaysian Education Development Plan reveal that, on average, graduates are expected to change jobs up to ten times over the course of their working lives. Furthermore, it is estimated that 65% of current primary school students will eventually be employed in occupations that do not yet exist. In light of these projections, Malaysia's higher education system must be strategically positioned to prepare students for a rapidly evolving global economy. This preparation entails cultivating graduates who possess strong ethical and moral foundations, a constructive worldview, and the critical problem-solving skills necessary to address both current and future challenges. Higher learning institutions must nurture lifelong learners—individuals who continuously update their knowledge and competencies, think critically, remain receptive to change, and act decisively in complex contexts. In addition to managing their personal development effectively, graduates must also demonstrate leadership capabilities to contribute meaningfully to societal progress.

Nonetheless, the Malaysian Education Development Plan also highlights existing gaps, particularly in graduates' critical thinking, communication, and language proficiency—especially in English. Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort to improve the productivity and effectiveness of higher learning institutions, particularly in the face of budgetary constraints and rising operational costs. Ensuring financial sustainability demands systemic reforms, alongside stronger, outcome-driven collaboration between academia and industry. Such partnerships are vital in enhancing research, development, and commercialization efforts, thereby aligning higher education outputs with national economic and innovation goals.

In the context of globalization, strengthening the national education system has become a foundational pillar for Malaysia's socio-economic development. To meet evolving demands, educational curricula must be continuously reviewed and updated to ensure that students acquire knowledge and competencies aligned with contemporary and future challenges. In accordance with the National Education Philosophy—which informs the educational trajectory from primary to higher education—students must be holistically guided to navigate the complexities of an increasingly technology-driven world.

The millennial generation, regarded as a critical national asset, holds significant influence in shaping both society and the nation's trajectory. Accordingly, it is imperative that they are equipped with advanced and relevant curricular content to develop the knowledge, skills, and adaptability required to overcome multifaceted challenges. Industry advisory groups play a crucial role in the viability and relevance of academic programmes. Composed of experts selected by higher learning institutions, these advisors offer valuable insights, strategic guidance, and facilitate collaborations that enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Their involvement ensures that academic offerings remain responsive to industry trends and expectations. In the absence of such partnerships, there is a risk that academic curricula may become misaligned with current developments, potentially impairing graduates' preparedness for the workforce. Ultimately, graduate success remains the central focus, as it underpins the sustainability and desirability of academic programmes at higher learning institutions, ensuring they continue to be institutions of choice.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a mixed-methods research design, employing both inductive and deductive approaches to address the formulated research questions. Quantitative and qualitative approaches were implemented through several key strategies: (1) the administration of structured surveys, (2) comprehensive document analysis, and (3) focused group discussions. In addition, (4) brainstorming sessions were conducted with domain experts and key stakeholders to review the findings critically and contribute to the development of a more refined and contextually relevant framework for general education courses, specifically. These approaches collectively intended to support the effective and sustainable implementation of the revised curriculum.

Data were collected using the following techniques:

1. Surveys – Structured instruments were administered to gather quantitative data from relevant stakeholders, including students and academic staff.
2. Document Analysis – A systematic review of institutional and policy documents was conducted to extract pertinent information and identify patterns related to liberal education practices.
3. Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) – FGDs facilitated deeper qualitative insights by exploring perceptions, experiences, and recommendations from participants across faculties.
4. Brainstorming Sessions – Collaborative sessions with subject-matter experts and key stakeholders were held to validate findings and co-develop a refined framework for Citra-UKM Education courses. To ensure the relevance and applicability of the study outcomes, broad-based stakeholder engagement was prioritized. Stakeholders involved included faculty members, students, alumni, parents, representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), industry professionals, and officials from government departments. This participatory approach supported the development of a robust and inclusive curriculum framework.

The primary instrument employed in this study was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed by the research team drawing on established literature (e.g., Saadeddine, 2013; Thomson, Eodice, & Tran, 2015) and informed by their professional experience. To ensure validity, the instrument was reviewed by a subject-matter expert in general education. Reliability was established through a pilot study, yielding a high internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.94.

The questionnaire was administered in both English and Malay and distributed online through multiple access links. Data collection relied on self-reported responses from students who had previously enrolled in general education courses, capturing both perceptual and experiential feedback. The questionnaire was structured into five main sections:

- 1) Demographic Information – Including respondents' profiles and details regarding the general education courses undertaken.
- 2) Course Delivery Methods – Gathering data on modes of instruction employed in general education courses.
- 3) Student Perceptions, encompassing four thematic sub-sections:
 - a. Content, instructional methods, and assignments (12 items)
 - b. Perceived effects following course completion (10 items)
 - c. Experiences of learning during the COVID-19 pandemic (8 items)
 - d. Overall impact of learning general education (7 items)
- 4) Achievement Factors – Assessing elements perceived to contribute to academic success in general education courses.
- 5) Course Selection Preferences – Capturing students' choices and motivations related to general education course enrolment.

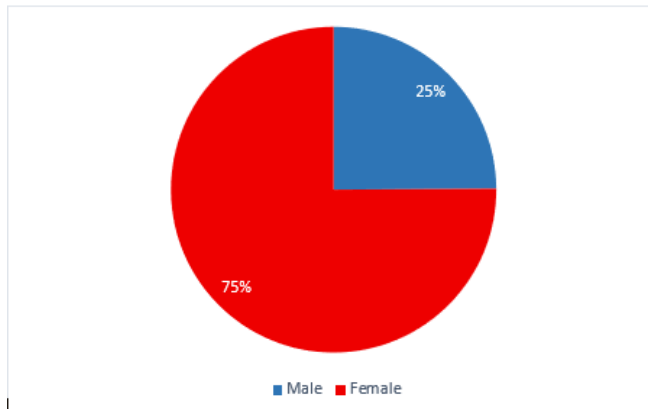
In addition, the questionnaire included two open-ended questions and a comment section to elicit qualitative feedback. These qualitative responses were analyzed thematically to complement the quantitative findings and provide deeper insights into students' experiences and suggestions for improvement. On top of that, an interview protocol was utilized to facilitate the collection of qualitative data through focused discussion groups.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings and discusses the survey which was conducted using an online survey administered via Google Forms, targeting students who were enrolled in Citra-UKM Education courses. The target population comprised students from UKM given to its prominent status as one of the top Malaysian research universities. A total of 297 students participated in the study, providing demographic data, which is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3 : Demography of UKM Respondents

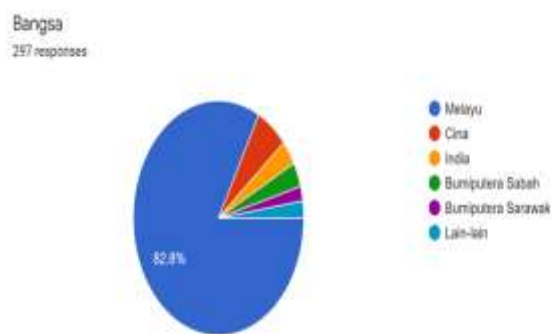
i. Gender



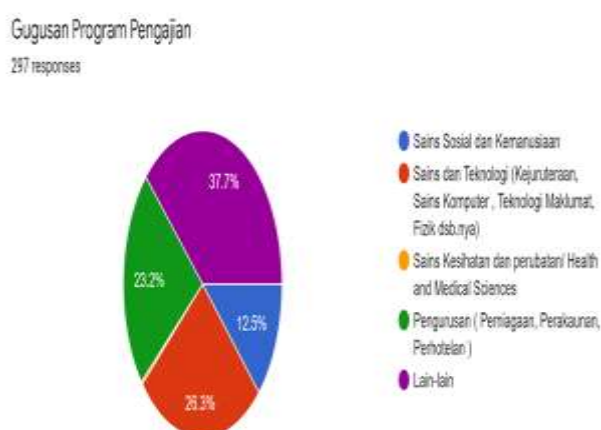
The pie chart illustrates the gender distribution of respondents which indicates that 75% were female, while 25% were male.

ii. Race

In terms of race, the pie chart below shows diverse races that include 82.8% Malay, 6.1% Chinese, 3.4% Indian, 3.4% Sabah natives, 2% Sarawak natives dan 2.4 Others.



iii. Clusters of Studies

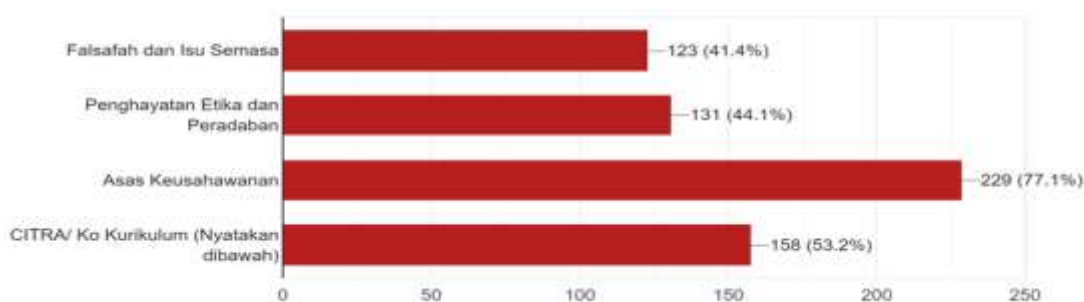


The pie chart on clusters of studies above shows 37.7% of the respondents are from various fields of studies, 26.3% Science and Technology, 23.2% Management, 12.5% Social Science and Humanity.

iv. Citra-UKM Education courses taken.

Kursus Pendidikan CITRA dan Matapelajaran Umum (MPU) Yang Pernah Diambil (tandaan semua kursus yang pernah diikuti):

297 responses



The majority of students have completed compulsory university courses such as Philosophy and Current Issues, Appreciation of Ethics and Civilization, Basic Entrepreneurship, as well as various Citra-UKM Education courses. This trend is attributable to the structure of Citra-UKM Education, which comprises a total of 10 credit hours dedicated to mandatory university subjects, in addition to 20 to 30 credit hours allocated for Citra-UKM courses. A more detailed explanation of this curriculum framework is presented below.

A total of 30 credit units in Citra-UKM Education are required for the conferment of degrees within programmes particularly under the Faculty of Science and Technology. These include programmes such as Biotechnology and Management, Oleo-Chemistry, Environmental Science, Chemistry, Chemistry Technology, Bioinformatics, and Food Science with Business Management.

In contrast, 40 credit units in Citra-UKM Education were mandated for degree conferment in non-professional and standard academic programmes. These include offerings from the Faculty of Islamic Studies, Faculty of Education, Faculty of Science and Technology (excluding the aforementioned specialisations), Faculty of Information Science and Technology, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, and Faculty of Economics and Management (excluding the Accounting programme).

The majority of students at UKM were required to take Citra-UKM Education courses, in accordance with the institutional requirements mandating the completion of 30 to 40 credit hours, depending on programme type. These courses are structured around three primary components:

1. Compulsory University Courses – 10 credit hours
2. Citra-UKM Outside Faculty Courses – a minimum of 20 credit hours
3. Citra-UKM Equivalent Courses – a maximum of 10 credit hours

For students enrolled in professional programmes, or those following the 2u2i and 3u1i models, the Citra-UKM Education requirement was capped at 30 credit hours. In contrast, non-professional and standard programme students were expected to fulfill a 40-credit hour requirement. The Compulsory University Courses, classified at course level CW, are offered exclusively by the University CITRA Centre. Students were required to complete and pass all 10 credit hours within this category as a core component of their degree progression.

Compulsory University Courses are as follow:

For students with Malaysian citizenship

- LMCW1022 - Basic Entrepreneurship and Innovation (2 credits)
- LMCW2022 – Management & Data Analytics (2 credits)
- LMCW2143 – Philosophy and Currents Issues (3 credits)
- LMCW2153 – Ethics Appreciation and Civilization (3 credits)

For Non-Citizen students

- LMCW1022 - Basic Entrepreneurship and Innovation (2 credits)
- LMCW2193 – Bahasa Melayu Communication 2 (3 credits)
- LMCW2022 – Management & Data Analytics (2 credits)
- LMCW2143 – Philosophy and Currents Issues (3 credits) OR
- LMCW2153 – Ethics Appreciation and Civilization (3 credits)

Citra-UKM Courses are those course levels with C1, C2, C3, C4, C5 & C6. Students must complete the minimum credit requirement set by Citra as shown in the table below.

Table 1: Citra-UKM Courses

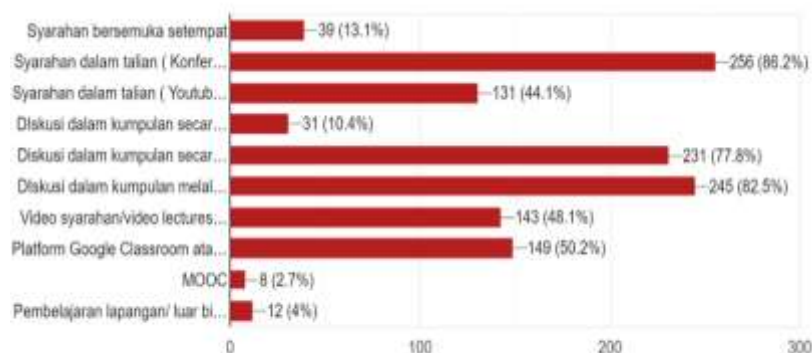
Citra Domain	Non-Professional Program (Minimum credit per domain)	Professional Program (Minimum credit per domain)
Citra 1 – Citra Ethics, Citizenship & Civilization	4	4
Citra 2 – Citra Language, Communication & Literacy	4	4
Citra 3 – Citra Quantitative & Qualitative	2	2
Citra 4 – Citra Leadership, Entrepreneurship & Innovation	2	2
Citra 5 – Citra Science, Technology and Sustainability	2	2
Citra 6 – Citra Family, Health and Lifestyle	2	2

* The balance credit for Citra-UKM Courses according to the domain is determined by the student. Students are free to choose any course that has course level Citra-UKM through any of the Citra-UKM Domains.

v. Methods of Delivery of Citra-UKM Courses

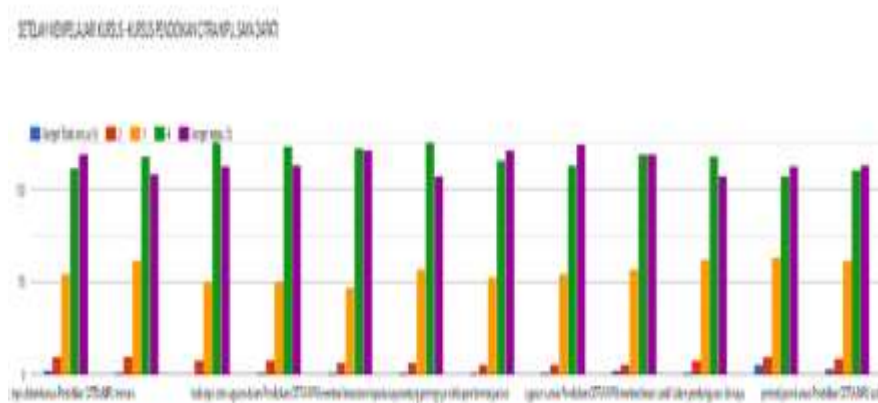
The delivery of Citra-UKM courses, as illustrated in Figure 4, primarily employed online instructional methods, largely due to the constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The predominant mode of instruction involved virtual lectures conducted through digital platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams, and similar applications. Additionally, collaborative learning was facilitated through online group discussions, utilizing various communication tools including Twitter, WhatsApp, and other digital networking platforms.

Figure 4: Methods of Delivery of Citra-UKM Courses



vi. Perception of the Citra-UKM Courses

Figure 5: Perception of the Citra-UKM Courses



Generally, Figure 5 shows a notably positive response toward Citra-UKM courses among students at UKM. Over 90% of the students selected either "agree" or "strongly agree" when asked about the value of Citra-UKM education topics. Specifically, students found these topics to be intellectually stimulating, enhanced their awareness of the importance of social life, and contributed meaningfully to their personal growth and self-development. This high level of endorsement underscores the relevance and impact of liberal education components embedded in the Citra-UKM Education curriculum.

Nevertheless, feedback obtained from student surveys—particularly through open-ended responses—has highlighted several areas for improvement. Key concerns include the total credit load associated with Citra-UKM courses, which some students perceive as excessive and burdensome, as well as the limited course offerings, leading to difficulties in course registration due to high demand.

In this regard, students had suggested enhancements to the design and delivery of Citra-UKM courses. These include creating more engaging and dynamic teaching and learning environments, reducing the workload associated with assignments, and diversifying assessment methods to better reflect varied learning styles. Addressing these issues is essential to ensure the continued relevance, appeal, and effectiveness of the Citra-UKM Education framework.

It is interesting to note that Citra-UKM Education mirrors Fox's (2018) notion of interdisciplinary and holistic learning by encouraging students to take courses outside their major, combining humanities, sciences, and professional fields to produce more versatile graduates. Likewise, Citra-UKM's adoption of High-Impact Educational Practices (HIEPs)—like service learning and experiential projects—supports engaged learning and real-world application. Furthermore, Citra-UKM education exhibits a unique element of liberal education which is nurturing globally competent students while grounding them in Malaysian values, language, and identity—striking a balance between universality and national rootedness.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of Citra-UKM Education at UKM has progressed positively and remains aligned with the philosophy and objectives of the liberal or general education. The Citra-UKM Education reflects a deliberate shift towards a more interdisciplinary and holistic approach to undergraduate learning. This strategic direction aligns with the evolving demands of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR 4.0), reflecting the university's commitment to nurturing adaptable, future-ready graduates who can thrive in an increasingly complex and interdisciplinary global landscape.

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