

5th INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE PROCEEDING

28 - 29 OCTOBER 2024
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Innovation and Cross-Discipline Collaboration in Social Development for Transformative Change

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THE IMPLICATIONS OF PASSING MARKS POLICY IN FINAL EXAMINATION, FINAL ASSESSMENT AND CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT TOWARDS ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG STUDENTS IN POLYTECHNIC MALAYSIA

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Abstract

Currently, there are 36 Polytechnics in Malaysia, each offering a variety of diploma programs across 15 departments. Assessments in these programs include continuous assessments, final assessment and final examinations to evaluating student performance and ensuring the achievement of learning outcomes. To ensure the quality of programs is up to the standardize criteria, Bahagian Peperiksaan dan Penilaian (BPN) a subdivision under Jabatan Pengajian Politeknik dan Kolej Komuniti (JPPKK) implemented a policy requiring a minimum passing mark of 20% for final examinations (FE), 40% for final assessment (FA) and 40% for continuous assessment (CA). This policy has been enforced for all programmes in polytechnics starting from academic session SII:2022/2023. This research is focuses on the impact of the policy to the number of students failure in each course by department, before and after the enforcement. Data are taken from four academic sessions, before the enforcement (SII:2021/2022, SI:2022/2023) and after the enforcement (SII: 2022/2023, SI: 2023/2024). This study involed Department of Business Study (JP), Department of Hospitality and Tourism (JPH) and Department of Information and Communication Technology (JTMK). The results show a notable decrease in number of students failure of the first academic session following the policy implementation, compared to the previous session for JP and JTMK. While, slightly increased number can be seen in CA for JP and JPH for the same period. Differently, FA for JTMK showed an increased trend after the enforcement. This shows that the policy changed had a slightly impact on the increases of failure courses only in FA, but the number of cases decreased in FE and CA.

Keywords: *JPPKK; Polytechnic; FA; FE; CA; Passing Marks*

INTRODUCTION

Polytechnic is one of education provider in TVET system. To fulfill future labor demands, the industry and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) must offer a variety of skills and competences to workers. TVET institutions must support workforce restructuring as part of the workforce's future preparation in order to guarantee that all levels of future workers possess the necessary knowledge and are very competent (Jelas & Mohd Ali 2014). The workforce must be able to adjust to technological changes, instructors and trainers must be prepared to transfer knowledge and skills efficiently, and TVET delivery methods must be expanded. These are all essential elements of skills for development initiatives. For the TVET students, this scenario necessitates real learning and assessment of the desired learning goals. TVET student growth, according to (Rusalam Munawar & Hardikusumah 2019), requires a strong evaluation system that can evaluate students' aptitudes in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. A successful TVET system should also be able to generate quantifiable results for assessment and evaluation (Comyn & Brewer 2015; Tshong & Yasin 2023). Two key

components will be represented by the evaluation. One is formative and aims to obtain input in the future. Summative evaluation, which gathers data and evaluates tangible accomplishment, is the second important component (Black & Wiliam 2018). The two modes should work well together in an ideal scenario. To guarantee the growth of informed and proficient pupils, assessments must be consistently improved upon (Shepard Penuel & Pellegrino 2018).

Jabatan Pengajian Politeknik dan Kolej Komuniti (JPPKK) which oversees 36 polytechnics around the nation, is essential to the country's Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system because it makes sure that these institutions offer high-quality instruction and training in a range of technical and vocational subjects. Assessments for student achievement, such as final exams, final assessment and ongoing evaluations, are essential to ensuring that learning objectives are met (Mukhtar & Ahmad 2015). Bahagian Peperiksaan dan Penilaian (BPN), a division under JPPKK is in charge of organizing and carrying out these tests and evaluations. Starting from the academic session SII:2022/2023, BPN introduced a policy of minimum requirement passing grade of 20% for final examinations (FE), 40% for final assessment (FA) and 40% for continuous assessment (CA) in an effort to improve academic integrity and standardize assessment standards (BPN 2024). The formal letter from BPN enforcing this regulation was dated February 18, 2023.

The introduction of a minimal passing grade policy has sparked worries about failure courses among students, despite efforts to boost standards of performance. This study looks at how the minimum passing mark requirement affects number of failure students at 3 different department namely JP, JPH, JTMK in Malaysian polytechnics. By examining data from four academic sessions: before the enforcement (SII:2021/2022, SI:2022/2023) and after the enforcement (SII:2022/2023, SI:2023/2024), this study aims to provide insights into the efficacy and implications towards student performance by the policy.

However, there are concerns about the policy's potential effects on student performance because it discriminates against students and failure courses. Initial observations show a discernible rise in instances of number of failure students in FE at the first semester after the policy's implementation. Thus, it is important to look into how this policy may affect the student performances and student attitudes towards examination. This research aims to allay these worries by examining data from several academic sessions to give insight on the consequences of the policy and to enhanced quality of assessment for curriculum development in Polytechnic Malaysia.

Therefore, this study aims to compare student's achievement before and after implementation of the policy. The objectives of the study are to:

- i identify number of failure student before and after the policy in FE, CA and FA
- ii determine overall student performance between grade whether there are differences in achievement.

METHODOLOGY

The data was selected through purposive sampling involving all Diploma Polytechnic students from all over Malaysia. Student's result from SII:2022/2023 until session SI:2023/2024 was descriptively analysed to obtain comparative results. The data was divided by two categories: before the enforcement of policy (SII:2021/2022, SI:2022/2023) and after the enforcement (SII:2022/2023, SI:2023/2024).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of student result was conducted in order to identify student's performance before and after implementation of minimum pass mark policy.

Data Analysis

Data of students' results from from SII:2022/2023 until session SI:2023/2024 was descriptively analysed to summarize and sum up the collected data. A comparison number of failure students before and after policy implementation between each group was presented by three assesment namely FE, CA and FA. Next, student performance between three selected departments also presented here.

i) Analysis number of failure for Diploma Student Polytechnic Malaysia in FE, CA and FA (2022-2024)

Table 1 and Figure 1 show the number of failure students for the SII:2022/2023 until SI:2023/2024. The policy brought significant improvements for JP and JTMK, with JP's failure count dropping from 4051 to 3200, and JTMK's dropping from 604 to 350. In contrast, JPH experienced a rise in failures, climbing from 214 before the policy to 358 after its implementation.

Table 1. Number of failure students in FE

DEPARTMENT	SESSION			
	BEFORE POLICY		AFTER POLICY	
	II:2021/2022	I:2022/2023	II:2022/2023	I:2023/2024
JP	1973	2078	1916	1284
JTMK	297	307	229	121
JPH	93	121	185	173
TOTAL	2270	2385	2145	1405

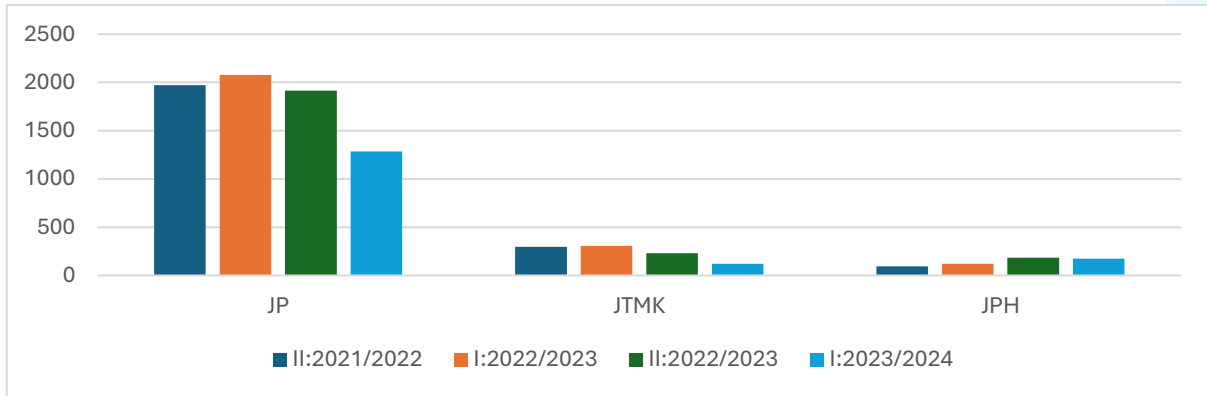


Figure 1. Chart of number of failure students in FE

Table 2 and Figure 2 show the number of failure students for the SII:2022/2023 until SI:2023/2024. The policy brought significant improvements for JP and JTMK, with JP's failure count dropping from 498 to 371, and JTMK's dropping from 105 to 57. In contrast, JPH experienced a rise in failures, climbing from 162 before the policy to 234 after its implementation.

Table 2. Number of failure students in CA

DEPARTMENT	SESSION			
	BEFORE POLICY		AFTER POLICY	
	II:2021/2022	I:2022/2023	II:2022/2023	I:2023/2024
JP	302	196	201	170
JTMK	54	51	42	15
JPH	52	110	142	92
TOTAL	356	247	243	185

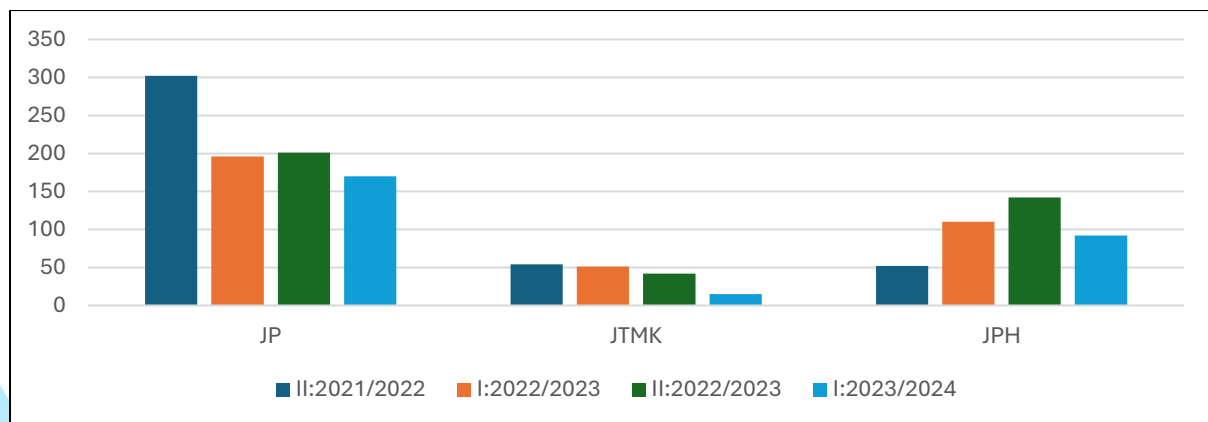


Figure 2. Chart of number of failure students in CA

Table 3 and Figure 3 show the number of failure students in FA for the SII:2022/2023 until SI:2023/2024. Before the policy implementation, there were 161 failure students in SII: 2021/2022, which decreased to 88 students in SI: 2022/2023. After the policy was implemented,

the number of failure students increased to 89 in SII: 2022/2023 and further rose to 111 in SI: 2023/2024.

Table 3. Number of failure students in FA

DEPARTMENT	SESSION			
	BEFORE POLICY		AFTER POLICY	
	II:2021/2022	I:2022/2023	II:2022/2023	I:2023/2024
JTMK	161	88	89	111
TOTAL	161	88	89	111

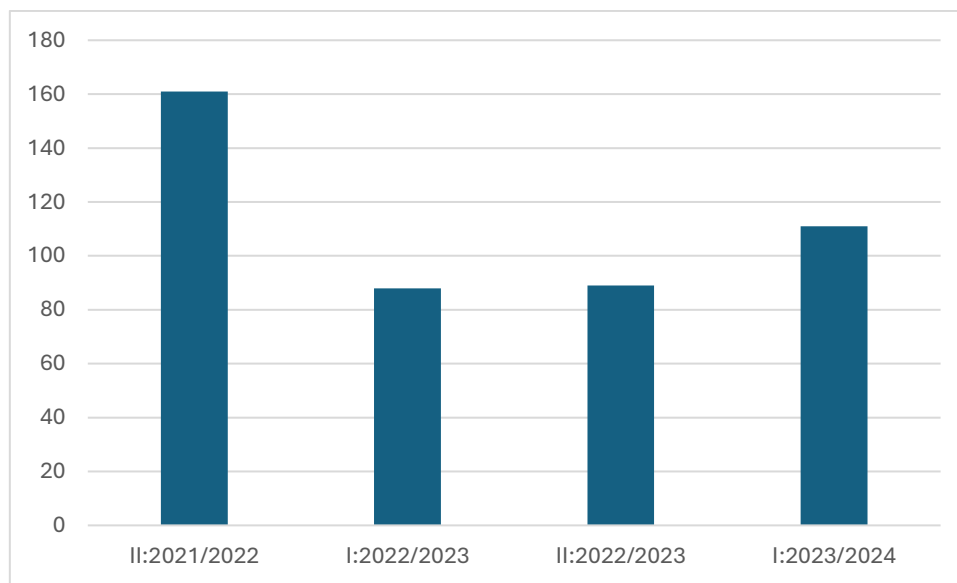


Figure 3. Chart of number of failure students in FA

ii) Analysis of overall student performance for Diploma Student between Grade for FE (2022-2024)

Table 4 and Figure 4 show the overall students' performance between grade before the policy has a right-skewed shape where most students got above grade B in FE. The same trend also appeared after the policy implemented where most student get a higher grade.

Table 4. Overall performance of student between grade in FE

GRADE	FE			
	BEFORE POLICY		AFTER POLICY	
	II:2021/2022	I:2022/2023	II:2022/2023	I:2023/2024
A+	4137	4041	4307	3023
A	12588	16202	12353	12120
A-	10383	11874	10263	9320
B+	11389	12681	10817	10632
B	11009	11758	10352	10479
B-	10052	10089	8921	9293
C+	8811	7937	7511	7956
C	7552	5810	6033	6275
C-	3571	2428	2741	2775
D+	2778	1604	2205	2021
D	3128	1459	2295	1988
E	1574	920	1471	1521
E-	277	152	283	222
F	602	414	644	472

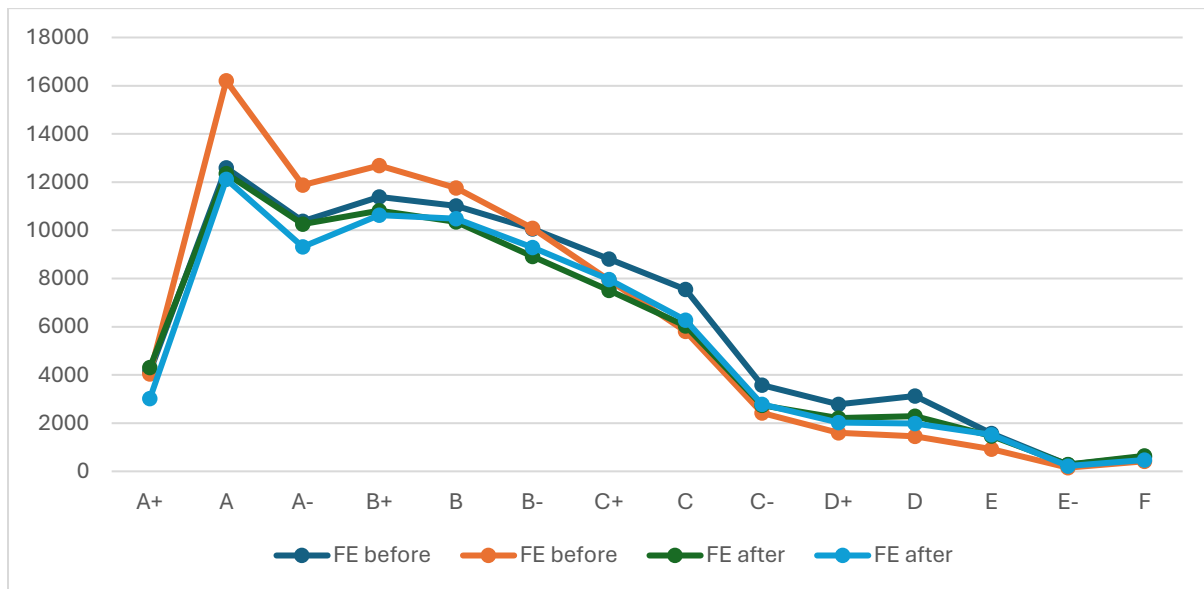


Figure 4. Chart of Overall performance of student between in FE

While in Table 5 and Figure 5 show the students' performance before the policy has a right-skewed shape where most students got above grade A in CA. This trend is normal in CA because lecturer will give student chances to repair CA result until before the final examination. The trend continued the same after policy implemented where most student get a higher grade. This study show, the implementation of passing marks policy has minimal impact to the overall student performance.

Table 5. Overall performance of student between grade in CA

GRADE	CA			
	BEFORE POLICY		AFTER POLICY	
	II:2021/2022	I:2022/2023	II:2022/2023	I:2023/2024
A+	772	1217	483	689
A	2071	2597	1664	2330
A-	759	884	804	922
B+	510	457	495	533
B	238	272	274	267
B-	195	125	161	102
C+	50	58	81	28
C	30	20	30	17
C-	2	6	12	
D+	1	4	6	7
D		2	8	
E	1		2	
E-				
F	7	9	14	10

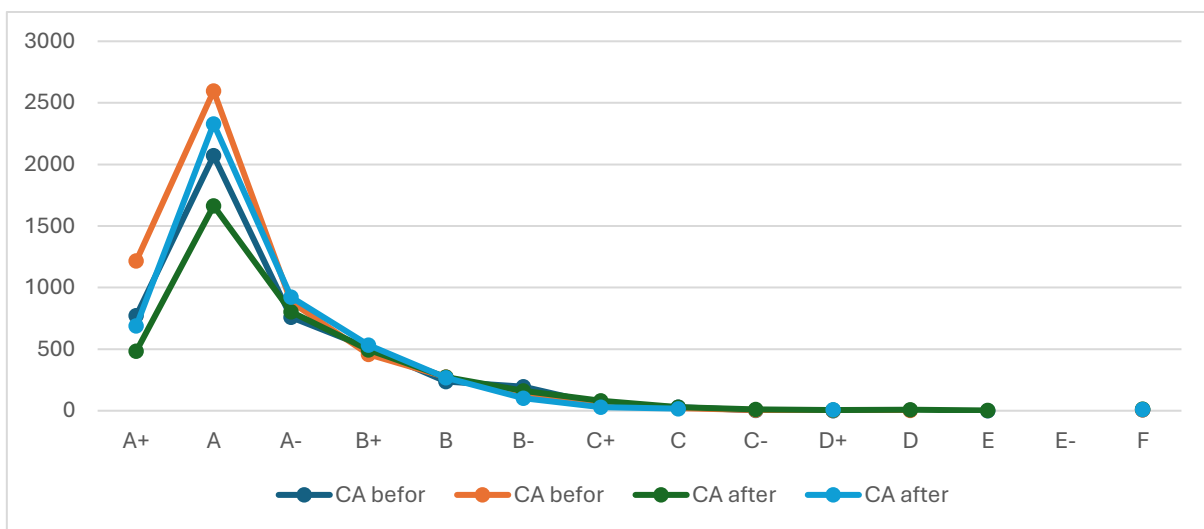


Figure 5. Chart of Overall performance of student between in CA

CONCLUSION

The focus has shifted from curriculum material to results or competences in vocational education and training, including polytechnic programs. Most people think that a competence evaluation should, at the very least, state its aim explicitly (Gillis 2023). The minimum passing mark policy has been implemented in an attempt to guarantee that polytechnic students' assessments and

results satisfy the required standards of quality. Students are nevertheless able to adjust to policy changes and improve their scores in spite of obstacles and worries about the fall in student performance. Students who pass the minimal scores for each department demonstrate a higher level of achievement.

This study concludes that student success was higher after the minimum passing mark policies for FA, FE, and CA were implemented than it was prior to their enforcement. Nevertheless, issues with test question quality, lecturer expertise, and instances of exam cheating also affect students' success. Overall, the study shows how student performance is affected by the minimal passing mark policy and how it must change to meet evolving educational demands.

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