

# Identifying Teachers' Perception of Integrity in School-Based Assessment Practice: A Case Study

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**Abstract**—This case study aims to identify teachers' perception as regards integrity in School-Based Assessment (PBS) practice. This descriptive study involved 9 teachers from 4 secondary schools in 3 districts in the state of Perak. The respondents had undergone an integrity in PBS Practice interview using a focused group discussion method. The overall findings showed that the teachers believed that integrity in PBS practice could be achieved by adjusting the teaching methods align with learning objectives and the students' characteristics. Many teachers, parents and student did not understand the best practice of PBS. This would affect the integrity in PBS practice. Teachers did not emphasize the principles and ethics. Their integrity as an innovative public servant may also be affected with the frequently changing assessment system, lack of training and no prior action research. The analysis of findings showed that the teachers viewed that organizational integrity involving the integrity of PBS was difficult to be implemented based on the expectations determined by Malaysia Ministry of Education (KPM). A few elements which assisted in the achievement of PBS integrity were the training, students' understanding, the parents' understanding of PBS, environment (involving human resources such as support and appreciation and non-human resources such as technology infrastructure readiness and media). The implications of this study show that teachers, as the PBS implementers, have a strong influence on the integrity of PBS. However, the transformation of behavior involving PBS integrity among teachers requires the stabilisation of support and infrastructure in order to enable the teachers to implement PBS in an ethical manner.

**Keywords**—Assessment integrity, integrity, perception, school-based assessment.

## I. INTRODUCTION

**P**ENTAKSIRAN Berasaskan Sekolah (PBS) or School-Based Assessment is part of an education transformation programme. It was implemented in primary schools in 2011 and in secondary schools in 2012 [1]. It is a policy involving holistic assessment in student achievement and learning development and comprised 4 assessment components which are: School Assessment, Physical Activity Assessment (PAJSK), Psychometric Assessment and Central Assessment. PBS has gone through many challenges, thus prompting KPM to review its implementation. In 2014, circular from Examination Board, KPM stated of improvements in the implementation of PBS [2]. This was due to a few issues raised by the teachers as well as the views regarding PBS effects on students. Some focused monitoring was conducted, especially on matters pertaining to the keying-in of students'

achievement forms which was an extra task to the teachers. KPM conducted a comprehensive study on the PBS implementation and took the initiative to review the policy and postpone further briefing in primary and secondary schools. At the same time, KPM organized workshops involving teachers, including those representing the teaching unions, formed a PBS Task Force committee and creating PBS War Room at the KPM level to handle arising matters. Improvement towards School Based Assessment Management System (SPPBS) access is being implemented at the KPM level to ensure teachers can access the system in an effective and easy way. All the steps mentioned had been taken to ensure that the PBS implementation elements could provide a holistic assessment of the student while at the same time, the process could help in decreasing the teachers' workload. Next, the KPM would be expected to announce the results of the monitoring and related studies, including further action towards the PBS implementation if the Education Minister is satisfied with the planned improvement, taking into account the latest findings from the KPM.

## II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

PBS is described as having holistic features, being integrated, balanced, flexible, and standards-based and forms part of the teaching and learning process [3]. It can be implemented if teachers are positive in making changes, knowledgeable and smarter in time management [4]. Reference [5] stated that there are 5 assessment approaches which should be followed for good assessment implementation. These include relevant assessment with what is taught, thus enabling the students to show their positive strengths and achievement, describing the assessment criteria and the appropriate assessment for the students as well as the suitable criteria for the teaching and learning pattern experienced. A weak implementation will affect the trust of the public, parents, and other organizations. As such, the assessment system implemented would have to describe each student's achievement clearly, the comparison should be made in a reliable manner, and the compared data should utilize the same scale [6].

A higher requirement for accountability in the education system means that the alignment between PBS practice expectations and teacher assessment practice is not only important but also very critical. However, teachers who are already burdened with various responsibilities may face difficulty in giving the perfect balance between KPM expectations and their own assessment practices. If teachers are provided with the complete information, they will become

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more responsible in their every effort and strive to overcome any problems. However, a study conducted on 180 teachers from 72 primary and secondary schools [7] found that the main factor contributing to problems in PBS implementation was the teachers' lack of understanding regarding the methods to implement PBS, as well as no specific training. The teachers were still in the dark about formative and summative assessment, the method of recording assessment and descriptors. The alignment of KPM's assessment expectation with assessment practice to upgrade the efficiency of the education system generally requires effective and planned support. A balanced system will be able to utilize limited resources effectively. An aligned target and target achievement measurement will enable those involved in education to work towards reaching the same objectives. [8] found that the alignment of expectations with teacher assessment practice in the classroom was at a medium level.

The PBS Implementation Review [1] found that the factors determining teacher readiness in implementing PBS were dependent on the teacher's professionalism and competency level in managing the assessment. The study also found that all the parties involved should work together in building a '*professional learning community*' which appreciates the culture of learning among teachers. The suggested practices include meetings, reflective action, attending courses, seminars and workshops. The practices which increase teachers' professionalism should be structured in the school administrative system with a more professional, open and sincere implementation. As such, the Integrity in School-based Assessment among Teachers should be planned based on assessment competency and integrity in assessment implementation practice. Integrity in school-based assessment should be conducted by combining 3 main focus which are 1) reinforcing teacher readiness from the affective aspect, 2) identifying students as learners and 3) teacher assessment practice and understanding which aim to strengthen teacher readiness in implementing school assessment.

The move to shift the assessment practice in line with KPM assessment expectations is not something which can be done in instantly. Continuous effort is needed so that teachers are prepared in a holistic way to implement the school assessment. Assessment has a strong influence on how the teacher teaches and how the students learn. Research on the effects of teachers' professional learning on psychological, leadership and organizational situation factors found that the psychological factor had a relatively big influence compared to other factors [9]. The findings' analysis showed that the alignment of practice and teachers' professional practice expectations were among the main elements of integrity in PBS implementation [10]. According to [11], integrity was a vital element in ensuring that the alignment of an implementation would be in line with the stipulated aims. Therefore, the aspect of integrity in assessment certainly involves the alignment of implementation with the required assessment aims. The alignment in the teacher's actions as he or she assesses the student would provide a certain impact and influence towards the latter's success and journey in life.

Integrity, as perceived by teachers who implement the school-based assessment in the education transformation, should be analyzed and reviewed to identify its weaknesses, as required by KPM. This information is indeed vital for identifying the relevant steps to be taken and to ensure better assessment implementation in the future.

### III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study was based on the alignment of the assessment practice with KPM's assessment expectations which were actualized as integrity in the implementation of school-based assessment. It was specifically intended to obtain the views of teachers regarding integrity in the PBS implementation. As such, the main objectives of the study are stated below:

1. To identify the perception of teachers regarding teacher assessment competency in the subjects taught with PBS assessment integrity.
2. To identify the perception of teachers regarding individual integrity in PBS assessment integrity.
3. To identify the perception of teachers regarding organisational activity in PBS assessment integrity.
4. To identify the perception of teachers regarding public service integrity in PBS assessment integrity

### IV. STUDY QUESTIONS

The teachers' perception of integrity in school-based assessment was based on the questions below:

1. What is the perception of teachers regarding teacher assessment competency in the subjects taught with PBS assessment integrity?
2. What is the perception of teachers regarding individual integrity in PBS assessment integrity?
3. What is the perception of teachers regarding organizational integrity in PBS assessment integrity?
4. What is the perception of teachers regarding public service integrity in PBS assessment integrity?

### V. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

- 1) This study is important as a reference for KPM to plan programmes for improving integrity in the implementation of school-based assessment in Malaysian primary and secondary schools.
- 2) The study findings can be utilized to form the foundation in the building of a module for Cultivating Integrity in School-based Assessment. This is aimed to develop teacher competency and to increase the awareness of the importance of cultivating integrity in the assessment practice.
- 3) This study will enable teachers to reflect upon and self-assess their ethics in the PBS practice.
- 4) The findings may help administrators, assessment managers and KPM to build a quality assessment process in line with the practice of integrity.
- 5) This study will contribute information to the PBS stakeholder about the problems faced by teachers while implementing assessment with integrity.

## VI. OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

## A. Integrity

'Integrity' comes from the Latin word 'integritas' meaning 'unaffected', 'strong', 'true' or 'reliable' [11, p. 47]. According to the DBP Bilingual Dictionary, integrity refers to 'honesty and integrity; perfection [11, p. 92]. Integrity is being seen as a personal quality which comprises aspects of honesty, responsibility, trustworthy and the like. The characteristics and levels of integrity may be influenced by culture, society and time. In Islam, integrity is translated into 'taqwa' which means 'to carry out the commands of Allah and avoid His prohibitions'. As such, integrity in Islam has a close connection with good behaviour and a Muslim character based on 'taqwa'.

## B. Integrity in School-Based Assessment Practice

The operational definition for school-based assessment practice can be referred to as PBS practice which is based on 3 main elements: self-integrity, organisational integrity and public service integrity which can be translated as consistent action and alignment of KPM assessment expectations with high self-competency.

## VII. LITERATURE REVIEW

Pelan Integriti Nasional [12] or the National Integrity Plan stated integrity as an excellent quality existing in individuals and organizations. Integrity is based on ethics and the reflection of ethics in one's everyday actions. It includes minor, unnoticeable things as well as the biggest, most conspicuous items. The tasks given to an individual should be seen as a responsibility which requires religious and worldly commitment, especially for Muslims. These values are important for a person who provides service in his line of work [11]. The reality is that it is not complete for an assessor to only have high qualifications in terms of the skills and knowledge required, but has no integrity value. Any mistakes or carelessness may bring harm to those assessed, which may raise certain questions pertaining to the values of the assessor himself. The success of a civil servant can be attributed to '*a high thinking and a high doing workforce*'. '*High thinking*' refers to an educated workforce able to add value and innovate [11]. An educated workforce consists of employees with experimental minds and always looking for new or alternative methods to increase service quality. However, high thinking is inadequate if it is not aligned with similar action and thoughts. At the same time, high thinking can assist an individual to determine the pros and cons of a particular action, which may be detrimental to his/her integrity. An educator should be able to interpret the transformation of education in Malaysia with relevant knowledge and competence regarding the assessment implementation. The implementation of assessment in the classroom is not an easy task as it consists of many activities like building pencil and paper tests, measuring achievement, grading, interpreting test scores, communicating assessment results and using assessment results to make decisions about teaching and learning. Reference [13] listed important

competencies which should be mastered by the teacher:

- Link assessment with a clear aim,
- Describe students' achievement expectations,
- Use suitable assessment method,
- Avoid bias in assessment,
- Communicate effectively about student achievement,
- Use assessment as an intervention in teaching and learning.

Reference [13] also listed teacher competency standard in student learning assessment as:

1. The teacher should be skilled in choosing a suitable method for his/her teaching.
2. The teacher should be skilled in developing the relevant assessment method for his/her teaching.
3. The teacher should be skilled in administering, scoring and interpreting the assessment result in which the assessment method has been prepared by the teacher himself/ herself or other parties.
4. The teacher should be skilled in using assessment results to make conclusion about the students, lesson planning, developing curriculum and making school improvements.
5. The teacher should be skilled in developing the students' grading procedure using the students' assessment.
6. The teacher should be skilled in communicating the assessment results with students, parents and other stakeholders.
7. The teacher should be skilled in detecting unethical assessment method and information.

The professional integrity of teachers in assessment should be protected and improved as can be seen in [10], which can be considered as a reference for teachers to teach with integrity (honesty, reliability and morally upright actions which are combined as integrity). Teachers show their integrity using professional commitment, responsibility, and action. Some of the behaviours which display the professional integrity of teachers are:

1. The teacher should act with honesty and integrity in all aspects of his/her occupation.
2. The teacher should respect other people's 'privacy' and act to protect classified information for the purpose of professional practice as well as maintaining the well-being of the individual student.
3. The teacher should act as a professional based on status, qualification and honest experience.
4. The teacher should avoid conflicts between his/her professional needs and personal needs which may affect the student.

Although the standards have been determined, teacher competency is a foundation which can guide the teacher towards the implementation of particular standards using an effective assessment system. A well-implemented assessment not only involves the mastery of the subject content, but the teacher should also improve his/her knowledge of basic competency elements in assessment which have been adapted to KPM's assessment expectations. The conclusion is that an assessment implementation conducted with integrity requires teachers who are competent in assessment, have self-integrity,

organizational integrity and public service integrity.

An individual with integrity will not cheat, steal or lie even if he or she will never get caught. He will not 'borrow' data which should not be accessed, "cherry pick" data to provide a different illustration, misuse information for illegal purposes or unethical expectations. Honesty and integrity are personal qualities expected from any individual without taking into account his/her position, role, responsibility or function in an organization. It does not matter what position the individual holds, working in an education environment demands unwavering adherence to an appropriate code of behaviour, organizational aims and professional standards.

Professionalism from a different point of view can be defined as a behaviour, aim or quality which gives a certain characteristic to the profession. As such, professional behaviour involves standard code of conduct which is applied to a specific role or position [11]. While the word 'professionalism' would usually refer to knowledge, expertise and academic preparation connected to a few types of skilled work, 'professionalism' can also mean a concept which is expanded to include roles and positions in an organization which manages data without taking into account the types of tasks. An important role for an assessor in the education system is to be consistent and persistent in showing honesty, integrity and professionalism.

Reference [15] stated that integrity is a term which refers to the quality of one's character. Integrity consists of attributes involving many aspects in one's life. Generally, it involves two aspects which are a person's formal relationship with himself/herself and it is linked to how that person acts in a morally upright way. Integrity refers to the overall self-integration of several personalities in a harmonious way. This involves a strong desire and relevant actions towards a particular matter despite the intense resistance. Self-integration is a concept more towards achievement and it does not solely rely on one's strong desire. It represents integrity in a more formal manner. The main construct in cultivating integrity in this study is based on [16] by ensuring that the assessment practice should be fair, transparent, curriculum-based and accountable via:

- i. The assessment process as a true picture of students' learning
  - The assessment has been planned from time to time in a continuous and responsive manner
  - The assessment and teaching and learning strategy are multi-varied according to the students' needs
  - The assessment would be aligned with the curriculum by taking into account the differences in students' learning styles and abilities.
- ii. The teacher and students are involved together in the assessment process so that the assessment expectations could be described clearly to the students.
  - Students' assessment involves continuous assessment and ongoing data acquisition.
- iii. Assessment communication
  - Communicating assessment with a clear and defined aim, objective and expectation.

- Communicating about students' assessment continuously.

A strong and defined assessment foundation can increase assessment accountability. The association and dependency between competence and integrity are the main variables in Cultivating Integrity in School-based Assessment.

Integrity is closely related to ethics. It can be described as ethical practice in everyday life, as well as the teacher's conduct and practice as a public servant. Integrity in assessment can be realised via three main elements:

- i. Individual integrity
- ii. Organisational integrity
- iii. Public service integrity

Individual integrity refers to the alignment of practice with what he/she preaches. A teacher who is also an assessor should display the alignment of his/her assessment practice with his/her explanation of the students' work based on the actual assessment understanding. This alignment should be seen from the aspect of expectations understanding and transfer in the assessment practice which is based on assessment understanding and competency. An assessor with integrity should also implement the assessment competently according to the principles of assessment as well as being consistently ethical and morally upright

Organisational integrity is a component in assessment integrity which should be internalised by the assessor. The educator as an assessor must implement an assessment work procedure which adheres to an excellent code of ethics, principles, policy and system based on organisational expectations of the school and the KPM. Each practice should generally be in line with the assessment principles and expectations.

Fig. 1 shows the fundamental elements of integrity in School-based Assessment. If all these elements of integrity (self-integrity, organisational integrity and public service integrity) are implemented, through the actualisation of competent and ethical behaviour in conducting the assessment, the alignment of the aims stated by KPM with teacher practices can thus be achieved. In short, competency and knowledge can be utilised to guide towards the choice of ethical behaviour in PBS implementation.

## VIII. METHODOLOGY

### A. Research Design

This study would be conducted using qualitative descriptive study to identify the perception of integrity towards teachers' PBS practice. The descriptive study aims to explain a situation or item observed.

### B. Respondents' Sample Selection

The research population comprised teachers in the state of Perak. Four secondary schools in the three districts of Perak were chosen randomly for this study. The nine teachers involved in this study were randomly chosen for the interview on school assessment understanding using the focused group discussion method. All the teachers interviewed were lower secondary school teachers who had implemented PBS for

different subjects. Each respondent was given a specific number during the interview and he/she answered the questions accordingly.

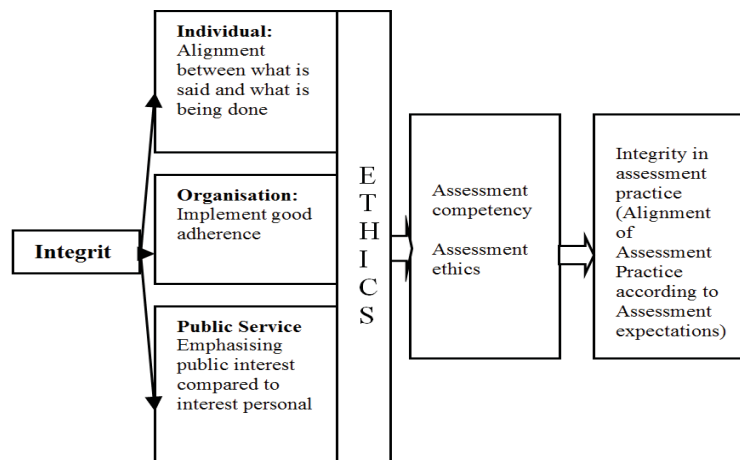


Fig. 1 Elements of integrity in School-based Assessment

### C. Research instruments

The data collection was completed using interviews via the focused group discussion. The qualitative data were acquired using the interview method. The interview protocol was designed to acquire responses and views from the sample chosen. The interview method used was semi-structured interview. All the interviews were recorded and documented in the form of interview transcripts. The qualitative data acquired from the interview method would be analysed using the Thematic Categorisation Method. The dialogues from the interview were transcribed. The qualitative data analysis was conducted using the steps below:

- i. Verbatim transcript,
- ii. Complete transcript,
- iii. Coding, and
- iv. Building and finding themes.

The full transcription which was clearly understood by the researchers was linked with four main constructs for integrity (self-integrity, organisational integrity and public service integrity) and also teacher competency in implementing PBS.

## IX. STUDY FINDINGS

The study findings were categorised according to the main themes based on the study questions i.e. the answers which fulfilled the criteria of the main four constructs relating to integrity in teacher assessment practice as below:

- Construct 1: Teachers' perception of teacher competency in PBS assessment integrity
- i. Teachers should be skilled in developing a suitable assessment method in their teaching. From the interviews with the teachers, it was found that respondent R4 viewed that teachers should have the understanding and mastery of the subject content, as well as being able to describe and disseminate the information to the students in various ways, such as oral, observation and exercise methods.

The analysis from the interviews showed that the teachers viewed PBS integrity as something achievable if they themselves are skilled in using various assessment methods.

- ii. Teachers should possess the skills to develop assessment methods suitable with their teaching in the PBS implementation. From the findings of the focused group discussion, Respondent R1 stated that teachers should always be ready with complete teaching aids as the failure to plan will cause teachers to forget many things during the lesson. As for R5, he/she stated that students would become more excited to learn when the teachers have mastered the subject content well. R5 also viewed that teachers should use a lower (linguistic) register and apply relevant subject content in line with the students' individual differences during the assessment.

The analysis of interviews with teachers in the focused group discussion found that the teachers viewed that they had to be constantly prepared before teaching, such as adjusting to a lower register and using content suitable with the students' individual differences.

- iii. Teachers should possess skills in administrating, scoring and interpreting assessment results for assessment methods developed by either the teachers themselves or other parties. The findings from the interview with teachers in the focused group discussion found that the students did not want to complete an assessment if they did not understand it. R5 and R6 stated that the students who did not understand the assessment would not proceed with the task; as such, the teachers had to adjust the task according to the students' levels. R1 informed that the teachers had to discuss matters pertaining to students' daily activities in order to attract the latter's attention before conducting the assessment. R6 stated that teachers should become more creative in implementing assessment in classes with weak or lower ability students. R5 viewed that many parents did not understand the PBS assessment

and still enquired on the PBS definition. He/she further noted that very few parents actually understood the assessment and this group comprised the professionals. R2, R9, R6 and R1 stated that this misunderstanding still occurred even though the parents had been informed about PBS on the registration day and in the Parents' and Teachers' Association (PTA) meeting. This occurred as only the parents of high-achieving students were present to meet the teachers or the school administrators.

The findings from the study found that the teachers perceived they needed to adapt the PBS assessment according to the students' levels. The teachers could only implement PBS if they managed to attract the students' attention first as the latter did not really care about the assessment. This apathy also seemed to exist among the parents as can be seen in the low attendance of the parents during the PTA meeting, as well as during the handover of the students' report card. The teachers faced a difficult situation to implement PBS according to the KPM assessment expectations due to the lack of cooperation from the weak students and their parents.

iv. The teachers should be skilled in utilising the assessment results to make decisions about the individual student, plan lessons, develop the curriculum and improve the school. Findings from the interviews with teachers found that the teachers felt emotionally pressured while conducting the assessment as some students were lazy and some others had poor attendance. As such, the teachers faced difficulties in making students' assessments and lesson plans. R1 explained that some classes provided motivation to the teachers due to the students' diligence, while a few other classes tended to discourage the teachers due to the students' laziness and frequent absence. The lesson plans should be suitable with the learners especially the weak students. R5 and R1 stated that weak students enjoyed practical activities and they were likely to detest writing. R2 and R6 informed that for weaker students, sometimes the teachers had to prepare food so the students could complete their tasks. Sometimes the teachers had to collect the tasks from the students' homes. R2, R6 and R7 informed that the assessment results were not utilised in the school assessment improvement and the findings were only required to be presented in the Unit meeting for the following year.

The analysis of the interview with teachers indicates that it is difficult for the teachers to practise integrity in the assessment, especially for weak students. The assessment results were also not utilised for the purpose of assessment improvement.

v. The teachers should be skilled in developing a learner grading procedure using the students' assessment. The findings from the interviews with teachers discovered that the grading procedure was different according to schools. R7 stated that 'the decision to determine whether the students have mastered an item or not can differ according to the school and it depends on the school to give certain marks.' R8 informed that the geography portfolio

assessment, for example, did not show a high reliability as the teachers had to help the students in copying certain items, as well as guide the students in completing the tasks due to non-existent internet service and the students' poor abilities. R6 stated that the assessment task using the portfolio method was difficult to be implemented due to the short time allocated. R8 found that the portfolio implemented did not have adequate representation of contents, especially as some did not include a balanced subject content.

The findings of this study indicate that the teachers did not conduct the grading process according to a standardized procedure shared with other schools and the validity of students' assessment results could be undermined as some teachers had to provide assistance to the students due to factors such as lack of time, lack of infrastructure and the students' own attitude. The assessments' validity is also another results is another issue as the content may not be comprehensively represented to explain the performance of students. As such, the situation implies that it is difficult to maintain integrity in PBS.

vi. The teachers should be skilled in communicating the assessment results with the students, parents and other stakeholders. The findings from the interviews with the teachers indicate that they faced some difficulties in explaining the assessment results to the students and their parents. R1 and R5 stated that only high-achieving teachers were concerned about PBS while some parents and also teachers did not really understand the policy.

The analysis of findings indicate that the teachers viewed the communication failure about PBS was due to factors such as students' ability as well as the attitudes of students, parents and teachers.

vii. The teachers should be skilled in detecting unethical assessment methods and information. The findings from the interviews with teachers show that there had been a misuse of power in relation to PBS ethical conduct and data collection. R8, R9 and R6 stated that teachers had to assist the students in completing the PBS assessment due to factors such as non-existent internet service, lack of time and students with poor ability.

The findings of the study indicate that the teachers viewed integrity in PBS as being affected.

• **Construct 2:** Teachers' views about teacher competencies in PBS assessment integrity.

A teacher who assumes the duty as an assessor should display the alignment between his/her assessment practice with his/her explanations related to assessment to students based on actual assessment understanding. The findings from the interviews with teachers indicate that respondent R1 viewed good instructional preparation as necessary, while respondents R1, R5, R2, R4 and R7 stated that teachers should recognise their students as learners. However, respondents R2, R6 and R9 informed that the students' assessment results were not entirely their own as the teachers had helped them to complete the tasks. The teachers had to complete their duties

as assessors (according to R1) even though the students were not interested in PBS.

The findings of the study indicate the teachers' view that they needed to find a balance between their duties as assessor and subject teacher. However, at the same time they cannot run away from assisting the students. This particular action from the teachers shows that there is a gap between assessment practice and the actual assessment expectations.

- **Construct 3:** Teachers' perception of organisational integrity in PBS assessment integrity.

The educator, as an assessor, should implement an assessment work procedure which follows the best code of ethics, principles, policy and system according to the organisational expectations set by the school and KPM. The findings from the interview with teachers indicate that they implemented PBS according to their abilities as well as the PBS implementation usability at the school level. R5 informed that PBS allowed teachers to approach the students, encourage students' overall development and increase the teachers' assistance for students. However, some teachers failed to adhere to the required work procedure due to factors outside their control. R8 explained that it was necessary to help the students complete their Geography portfolio as the time allocated by KPM was rather short, non-existent internet service and the weak student factor. R7 explained that PBS did not follow the expectations of KPM and it was unsuitable for weak students. R6 and R9 claimed that the PBS assessment did not reflect the students' actual work.

The study findings imply that teachers perceived organisational integrity in PBS could be difficult to be implemented as expected by KPM. Many factors could affect the adherence to the code of ethics, principles, policy and assessment system as expected due to the student and environment factor.

- **Construct 4:** Teachers' perception of public service integrity concerning PBS assessment integrity.

In general, public servants can be considered a group of educated employees who are able to offer added value and innovation to the public service. This particular group of employees acts based on knowledge, is likely to have an experimental mind and is always on the lookout for new or alternative ways to increase service quality. R5 explained that teachers had begun to feel comfortable with the PBS implementation, even though they have to collect a lot of evidence. On the other hand, R5 explained that some subjects, like Civics, were being excluded and not appreciated in the form assessment, which in turn affected the teachers' emotions. R5 described that some teachers were enthusiastically buying shelves to store the students' evidence. R6, R5, R1, R4 and R9 informed that the frequently changing system in a short period of time had caused confusion and emotional stress to the teachers. R2 and R6 stated that the action research had not been implemented.

The analysis of the study findings indicates that teachers felt that they had worked hard in conducting their duties as assessors who acted in the interest of the public, and tried their best to adapt themselves in their own ways. However, due to

the ever-changing system and no effective training, the teachers seemed to be in a confusion to implement PBS to the best of their effort. The teachers also did not conduct a prior action research to improve their practice and innovation.

From the analysis of the findings, it can be concluded that the teachers viewed that they should adapt their teaching, be prepared with well-planned instruction and adapt the assessment to the teaching method and the students' characteristic as a learner. The teachers also felt that the PBS integrity had been affected as some parents, students and teachers did not fully understand PBS. The teachers also viewed that they had to complete the assessments given without taking into account the assessment ethics and principles, thus causing the students' work to become an extension of the teachers' assistance. The public service integrity may also be affected with the changing assessment system, lack of training and lack of action research. Therefore, the analysis of the findings indicates that the teachers perceived organisational integrity in PBS as something difficult to be implemented, based on the expectations stated by KPM. A few factors also affected the adherence to the code of ethics, principles, policy and assessment system as required by KPM such as student and environment factors.

#### X. DISCUSSION

Teachers' perception on integrity in PBS is a vital point of departure in the researcher's endeavour to understand the important needs and elements in PBS implementation from the teachers' perspective. The teacher as the person implementing the policy is in an environment which may affect the implementation in an honest, decent manner. From the findings, the elements which show that PBS integrity requires teachers who can master the content, plan the instruction and identify the learners are indeed aligned with the main construct in cultivating integrity in assessment, as stated in [14] and [16].

Teachers' professional integrity in assessment should also be maintained and improved, similar to the type of conduct mentioned in [10]. This code can be considered as a reference for the teachers' responsibilities. Among others, the teacher has to teach with integrity (being honest, decent and having morally upright behaviour; all these are merged together as integrity). The teacher displays integrity through his/her professional commitment, responsibilities and actions. The study findings also indicate that teachers view the assessment competency as the main element in PBS integrity. However, elements which are beyond the teachers' control, such as the students' laziness, apathy about PBS and problems with attendance, make it difficult for the teachers to act with integrity. As such, the competency element on its own is inadequate to maintain the integrity of PBS. Other supporting elements from various parties, such as the school administrator, parents and the community, are important to safeguard the integrity of PBS.

The study findings show that the teachers implement the assessment as directed by the organisation. At the same time, they also hold the responsibility as public servants. However,

an undeniable element which cannot be denied as a contributing factor to the assessment integrity is the organisational culture itself. The PBS integrity may become affected if teachers are not given adequate training, do not practise action research in improving their assessment and are forced to face an ever-changing system. The teachers viewed effective in-service training as valuable for improving their understanding of PBS, as well as enabling them to implement PBS with integrity. The weakness of the support system was one of the elements perceived by the teachers to be detrimental to the integrity of PBS. The completion of the PBS task, which required internet and technological assistance, affected the PBS integrity. The teachers had to provide help to students who lived in deprived neighbourhoods. Not only that, the selection of assessment tasks which did not represent the overall items or constructs from a subject may also affect the PBS results, the findings' reliability and integrity. Therefore, the elements which contributed towards PBS integrity, from the teachers' perception, are much more varied and beyond the scope of literature, such as the assessment competency, self-integrity, organisational integrity, and public service integrity. A few elements which assisted in the achievement of PBS integrity are training, parents' and students' understanding, environment (involving human resources such as support and appreciation) and non-human resources such as the availability of technological and media infrastructure.

#### XI. RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

Teachers are PBS implementers who have a strong influence on the integrity of PBS. However, to support the realisation of a morally upright conduct among the teachers concerning the PBS implementation, stable support and infrastructure are needed to enable the teachers to implement PBS in a more serious, ethical manner. This study may open up the views of organisations involved in PBS so that its implementation would be based more on relevant knowledge and skills in the future. The teacher assessment competency should be improved before other heavier responsibilities are given, such as PBS accountability, in order to produce an assessment with integrity.

The findings of this study are vital for the stakeholders to understand the effects of ill-planned action for PBS. The researchers could also produce modules to improve the teachers' implementation of PBS. Furthermore, the researchers could also identify elements or constructs which contribute towards the assessment integrity from the literature review and also from the teachers' perspective.

#### XII. CONCLUSION

Integrity in PBS which refers to the alignment of PBS practice with the actual PBS expectations can be considered as the determinant of trust for the PBS applicability and assessment system. High integrity from all parties will enable PBS to be implemented based on principles and ethics which describe honest and decent conduct. As such, before PBS is utilised as a mechanism to assess students' achievement,

elements which affect the PBS integrity should be given proper attention.

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