

# Challenges and Placement for History Education Teachers: Post Covid-19

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**Abstract**—This paper discusses the Challenges and Opportunities of History Education Teacher Placement: The Post-Pandemic Era of Covid 19. Descriptive quantitative research methods were used in this study. The population for this study is focused on students of History Education Faculty of Psychology and Education at a public university in Sabah who are in the first year and second year of study that is session 2020 & 2021. The results show that the dominant factor of vacancies in finding placements to serve other than public schools is teaching education or History subjects in private secondary schools. However, History Education students still feel grateful if they are destined to teach in non-government and non-option schools. They are also willing to shoulder responsibilities in the workplace without much grievance. Given the difficulty of getting a job in the post-pandemic era of Covid-19. Recognizing the current needs, History Education students are also willing to equip themselves with the skills to explore various online or non-online platforms to develop a teacher career regardless of options.

**Keywords**—Placement challenges, History Education graduates, Marketability.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) will make a special one-off recruitment involving a total of 18,702 teachers for grade DG41 which is also open to non-education graduates to overcome the issue of teacher shortage in the country. Education Minister Datuk Dr Mohd Radzi Jidin said the move was aimed at addressing the shortage of teachers in Sabah, Sarawak, Selangor and Johor as well as efforts to achieve planning under the National Rehabilitation Plan. According to him, the recruitment will, among others, focus on filling teacher vacancies for certain subjects which has caused a gap in teaching staff to become the main challenge of the current national education system. The Ministry of Education will work with the Education Services Commission (SPP) to ensure more orderly planning with a new approach by the ministry together with the SPP and the Public Service Department (JPA). Recruitment advertisements will be issued by SPP on July 7, 2021 and placement will begin in October in stages. The shortage of teachers for the states involved involves primary and secondary schools especially in certain subjects such as English, Malay Language and Islamic Religious Education. For primary

schools, there are five subjects with a shortage of teachers, namely English, History, Special Education, Islamic Religious Education and Information and Communication Technology. For secondary schools, there is a shortage of teachers for Malay, English, Special Education, Islamic Religious Education and Design and Technology. Through a new recruitment approach through the collaboration of SPP and JPA, will provide opportunities to interested and qualified graduates as prescribed. Many wonder if they have qualifications in education but are not called to teach. In this context it is because of the mismatch of the subjects. The supply (of education graduates) available is very limited. However, for this recruitment will give priority to education graduates but at the same time a new approach is used in order to overcome the issue of teacher mismatch for certain subjects [12].

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Marketability is a concept that is difficult to measure and define [11] [18] [20]. The concept of employability seems to evolve in line with changes in work patterns and workforce models. McQuaid and Linda [16] state that although employability was an unclear concept in the past decade, it now plays an important role in determining UK labor market policy, in some European countries and other countries as well. Employability is now seen as a key target in most labor market policies and labor strategies in most countries especially for graduate marketability. University graduates hold high positions in the economy and many countries regard them as the social elite and consequently as a working group to access high incomes that have the potential to fulfill the careers of knowledge workers. Further, employability also encompasses aspects of attitudes and personal attributes of loyalty, commitment, honesty, punctuality and integrity. This suggests that employability encompasses aspects of proactive action, personal management attitudes and individual career management abilities in an effort to obtain a desired career [5].

Graduate marketability refers to the skills that graduates need to possess to obtain and retain employment [14] through the learning of new skills for different functions as demanded by employers or industries [15]. Whereas according to Hillage and Pollard [22], the ability to work has the ability to get the first job, keep it, and acquire a new job if needed. Harvey [11] defines graduate employability as the ability of graduates to demonstrate the qualities required by employers for future organizational needs. Job skills are a set of personal achievements, understandings, and attitudes / qualities that

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indicate an individual is potentially better able to get a desired job and succeed in a career choice. In general, job skills are aspects of the skills and knowledge that students need to possess to complete them to meet the various job demands in the labor market after they graduate.

The marketability aspect of development graduates is an important core in higher education to enable them to work well in the job market. In addition to knowledge skills, employers also demand good personalities from graduates. Among the important factors to consider are the ability to adapt to the firm's culture and the desire to learn continuously [4] [3]. Eric, Serge & Karim [8] explored the gap between industry expectations and perceptions of engineering graduate skills groups in the Middle East and North Africa regions. They measured the importance that engineer managers place 36 skills relevant to engineers. The results showed a significant gap between managerial expectations and satisfaction with all 36 skills. Managers feel that graduates need improved communication, time management, and continuous learning. Managers report that recent engineering graduates demonstrate overall readiness for employment. Yee Ting Ngoo, Kui Ming Tiong, Wei Fong Pok [21] found that employers demand more independence and leaders, rather than followers, and graduates are more inclined to management. A competitive labor market requires cooperation and understanding between firms and universities. In response, universities are able to develop curricula in nurturing leadership-inclined graduates under academic delivery who are knowledgeable about current market needs. Elements that influence motivation in learning include the aspirations of the soul, the ability of the student, the state of the student, the state of the environment for the student, the dynamic element in learning and the effort for the teacher in learning [10]. A history degree is also clearly a solid foundation for further professional development, as many of its graduates receive professional training in fields such as law, accounting, journalism, libraries, teaching, and computer science. Unemployment levels among history graduates temporarily declined towards the end of the millennium reflecting the macroeconomic improvements that occurred in the late 1990s, although historically in most years it was slightly above average for all subjects undergraduate [6].

### III. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Although there are many History trainee teachers who were born from educational institutions but according to the Minister of Education Dr. Mohd Radzi Bin Md Jidin [9], there are still schools that lack teachers including History teachers. Ihsan [13] states that in order to acquire skilled educational human resources, the country needs to train and supply adequate educators. This shows that developed countries depend on skilled human resources and in order to do so, teachers who are educators must be given opportunities in order to achieve that goal. Placement here is associated with the opportunity to serve. The components of this placement cover aspects of the History Option, pedagogical skills as well as teacher attitudes [17]. Prospective History teachers build their current self-competencies through the learning process in universities or educational institutes. These placement competencies

mastered by prospective History teachers will help shape teachers' self-decisions and also build students' excellence [7]. Faculty of Psychology and Education, Univeristi Malaysia Sabah is an organization that trains prospective History teachers in the field of History education. The issue of readiness to find a place or be placed in public or private schools in urban or rural areas is one of the elements of readiness that must be present in prospective History teachers. It has to do with the attitude and willingness of prospective teachers to find work and contribute to the development of human capital, especially in urban or rural areas. Therefore, are trainee teachers from the Faculty of Psychology and Education, Universiti Malaysia Sabah ready to find work or be placed to serve in public or private schools in rural areas and non-elective areas? Therefore, this study was conducted to find out the level of readiness of prospective History educators in finding work and providing services no matter where they are after graduation.

### IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- i. Identify the challenges and placement opportunities of History education teachers in the post-pandemic era of Covid-19.
- ii. Identify a conceptual framework for developing the placement of History Education graduates.
- iii. Identify placement challenges and opportunities as drivers of improving the placement capacity of Covid-19 post-pandemic History Education graduates.

Null hypothesis : There was no correlation between the study data sets.

### V. METHODOLOGY

Descriptive quantitative research methods were used in this study. It aims to accurately and systematically describe a population, condition or phenomenon. It can answer the question of what, where, when and how are the challenges and opportunities of placement of History education teachers in the post-pandemic era of Covid-19. Descriptive research design can use a variety of research methods to investigate one or more variables.

The population for this study is focused on History Education students of the Faculty of Psychology and Education, Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) who are in the first year and second year of study that is session 2020 & 2021. The total number of History Education students in the first and second years is 45 students. The purpose of taking these first year students as respondents are because they have followed the entire History Education program in the "Open Market" available at UMS. They are prospective teachers who will look for placements to teach later. Based on the table, if the study population is 45 people, then the researcher must take all 45 respondents to be sampled in the study. However, the study sample of 45 people was purposefully selected from the total number of History Education students in the first and second year of study, namely the 2020 & 2021 sessions [2]. In constructing this questionnaire, the researcher used an item in the form of a checklist that is the method of using the Likert Scale. Likert scale type items require respondents to answer by marking a choice of answers according to levels one to five as shown in table 1.1 below:

TABLE I  
LIKERT SCALE

Likert scale	1	2	3	4	5
Feedback	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Less Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

(SAUL MCLEOD, 2019; ANDREW, ET.AL, 2021)[19] [1]

VI. FINDINGS

In this study, the total number of respondents involved was 45 people. Based on Table 2, the data shows that 100 percent are students of the Education with Honors (History) Program of the Faculty of Psychology and Education, Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) who are in the first and second year of study, namely session 2020 & 2021. They are expected to graduate in 2024 & 2025.

A. Analysis Regarding The Dominant Factors Of Vacancy In Finding Placement To Serve

TABLE II  
DOMINANT FACTORS OF VACANCIES IN FINDING PLACEMENTS TO SERVE OTHER THAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Item Num	Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Vacancy for History Education (Private High School)	21	46.67
2	Vacancy for History Education (Private Primary School)	12	26.66
3	Education Job Vacancies (Private High School)	6	13.32
4	Education Job Vacancies (Private Primary School)	2	4.45
5	Non-Educational Vacancies in the public and private sectors	2	4.45
6	Self-employed	2	4.45
	Total	45	100

Based on Table 2 above, it is found that the percentage value obtained shows that 21 people representing 46.67 percent of the total respondents chose to be placed to teach History in private secondary schools. Meanwhile, a total of 26.66 percent of the 12 people chose to be placed to teach History in private primary schools, followed by a total of 6 people representing 13.32 percent of the respondents chose to be placed to teach subjects other than History in private secondary schools. Next, 4.45 percent, that is, 2 respondents chose to be placed to teach subjects other than History in private primary schools. As for the factor of non-educational vacancies in the public and private sectors, and self-employment, each is 4.45 percent, which is a total of 2 people.

B. Analysis of Placement Readiness in Non-Government Schools

TABLE III  
PLACEMENT READINESS IN NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Item Num	Item	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Interpretation of Mean Score
1	It is acceptable to teach in non-government schools than in government schools	3.97	0.764	High
2	Feel grateful to get a place to teach in a non-government school	3.89	0.834	High
3	Willing to make adjustments after enrolling to serve in a non-government school	3.80	0.943	Moderate
4	Willing to serve in non-government schools without any grievances	3.92	0.781	High
5	Accept teaching placements offered even though the school was non-government and had to be away from family	3.97	0.688	High
6	Be willing to explore a variety of online or non-online platforms to develop a teacher career. Examples: youtube, tik tok, google meet, google classroom, tuition center, nursery, kindergarten and others.	4.28	0.619	High
	Overall Average	3.97	0.772	High

Based on Table 3, it is seen that the average overall mean score value for readiness to teach in non-government schools is high at 3.97 with a standard deviation of 0.772. The average obtained shows that overall the students of History Education of the Faculty of Psychology and Education, UMS have a high level of readiness in terms of readiness to teach in non-government schools. Based on the items found in the acceptance aspect, the item Ready to explore various online or non-online platforms to develop a teacher's career showed the highest mean score of 4.28 with a standard deviation of 0.619. While the item ready to make adjustments after registering to serve in non-government schools is the lowest mean score of 3.80 with a standard deviation of 0.943.

### C. Analysis of Readiness to Teach Non-Option Subjects

TABLE IV  
READINESS TO TEACH NON-OPTION SUBJECTS

Item Num	Item	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Interpretation of Mean Score
1	It is acceptable to teach non-option subjects in non-government schools or government schools	3.95	0.766	High
2	Feel grateful to have the opportunity to teach non-option subjects in non-government schools or government schools	3.87	0.836	High
3	Willing to make adjustments to teach non -option subjects in non-government schools or government schools	3.78	0.945	Moderate
4	Willing to teach non-option subjects in non-government schools or government schools without any complaints	3.90	0.783	High
5	Accept the responsibility of teaching non-option subjects in non-government schools or government schools despite having to learn knowledge regarding new subjects being taught	3.95	0.690	High
6	Be willing to explore a variety of online or non-online platforms to grow a teacher's career regardless of options. Examples: youtube, tik tok, google meet, google classroom, tuition center, nursery, kindergarten and others.	4.26	0.621	High
	Overall Average	3.95	0.774	High

Based on Table 4, it is seen that the average overall mean score value for teaching non-option subjects is high at 3.95 with a standard deviation of 0.774. The average obtained shows that overall the students of History Education of the Faculty of Psychology and Education, UMS have a high level of readiness in terms of readiness to teach non-option subjects in government and non-government schools. Based on the items found in the

acceptance aspect, items willing to explore various online or non-online platforms to develop a teacher's career regardless showed the highest mean score of 4.26 with a standard deviation of 0.621. While items ready to make adjustments to teach non-option subjects had the lowest mean score of 3.78 with a standard deviation of 0.945.

## VII. DISCUSSION

### A. Dominant Factors Of Vacancies In Finding Placements To Serve Other Than Public Schools

Based on the results of the study, it was found that almost half of the History Education students of the Faculty of Psychology and Education, UMS which is 46.67 percent representing 45 people choose to teach education or History subjects in private secondary schools. This may be because they have become familiar with the mind-set of the History Education Program in the early stages of their studies. They chose to teach education or History subjects in private primary schools, which is 26.66 per cent. The third factor is choosing to teach subjects other than History in private secondary and primary schools. Positively, it is seen as a necessity because today a teacher needs to be multi-disciplinary knowledgeable to undergo multi-tasking in school. Next the History Education students chose to venture into non-educational fields in the public and private sectors. This is because maybe they are thinking about survival to get a job. An encouraging percentage (4.45%) of the choice to be self-employed is evidence that History Education students are willing to become entrepreneurs in education or non -education online or offline in the future if they do not have the opportunity to teach in government or private schools.

Critical value of p (probability) and significance level:  $p = 0.005$  (statistical significance level 99.5%) Degree of freedom: degree of freedom = 0. The conclusion is that there seems to be a very strong positive correlation of Rs (+1) value. There was a 0.5% probability that the null hypothesis was correct,  $p = 0.005$  (99.5% statistical significance level). Therefore, the researcher must accept the alternative hypothesis (that there is a very strong positive correlation between the study data sets) and reject the null hypothesis that there is no correlation. Correlation does not indicate cause and effect. One variable cannot cause another.

The findings of the study show that the readiness of the students of the History Education Program towards teaching acceptance in non-government schools is at a high level. The findings also prove that the students of the History Education Program still feel grateful if they get a place to teach in non-government schools. It is known that the History Education Program is "open market" and UMS or the government is not bound by the offer of teaching placements in government schools. Therefore, the students of the History Education Program seem to understand when it is found that they are ready to make adjustments after registering to serve in non-government schools. In fact, the findings also prove that most are willing to serve in non-government schools without any complaints. As such, their acceptance of the teaching placements offered even when the school is non-government and forced to be away from family is true. However, they still feel the need to be prepared to explore various online or

non-online platforms to develop a teacher's career, if they do not have the opportunity to teach in government or non-government schools. Examples: youtube, tik tok, google meet, google classroom, tuition center, nursery, kindergarten and others.

The results of the study found that the students of the History Education Program can be accepted to teach non-option subjects in non-government schools or government schools at a high level. Students of the UMS History Education Program were found to feel grateful if they had the opportunity to teach non-option subjects in non-government schools or government schools. In fact, they are also willing to make adjustments to teach non-option subjects in non-government schools as well as government schools. The findings of the study also show that they are willing to teach non-option subjects in non-government schools as well as government schools without any complaints. In fact, they also accept the responsibility of teaching non-option subjects in non-government schools or government schools even though they have to learn knowledge about the new subjects taught. As such, students of the History Education Program are willing to explore a variety of online or non-online platforms to develop a teaching career regardless of options. Examples: youtube, tik tok, google meet, google classroom, tuition center, nursery, kindergarten and others. This situation is due to the "open market", in addition to acquiring knowledge of History and educational pedagogy options, indirectly it can also help them to be better prepared to adapt if they do not have the opportunity to teach option subjects. This is because according to Halimah Harun (2006), trainee teachers need to show a positive attitude towards the teaching career even though the profession is quite challenging and has a lot of stress.

### VIII. CONCLUSION

From the discussions that have been done, there are some conclusions that can be concluded that the dominant factor of vacancies in finding placements to serve other than public schools is teaching education or History subjects in private secondary schools. However, History Education students still feel grateful if they are destined to teach in non-government and non-option schools. They are also willing to shoulder responsibilities in the workplace without much grievance. Given the difficulty of getting a job in the post-pandemic era of Covid-19. Recognizing the current needs, History Education students are also willing to equip themselves with the skills of exploring various online or non-online platforms to develop a teacher career regardless of options. Examples: youtube, tik tok, google meet, google classroom, tuition center, nursery, kindergarten and others.

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