

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE KELANTAN RABBANI EDUCATION POLICY AS A HIGH-IMPACT EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE EMPOWERMENT CONSTRUCT

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ABSTRACT

The evolution of Malaysia's higher education system in the 21st century has seen substantial progress. The Malaysian Education Development Plan for Higher Education (2015-2025) prioritizes a comprehensive and integrated approach to curriculum development. As a result, the High-Impact Educational Practices (HIEP) document was introduced in 2018. The goal of implementing HIEP is to produce graduates who possess holistic knowledge and ethical values in line with the National Philosophy of Higher Education. This study aims to analyse how the Kelantan Rabbani Education Policy (DPRK), introduced by the Kelantan State Government in 2018, can support the aspirations of HIEP. Using thematic content analysis, this qualitative study examines the correlation between the 9 DPRK principles, the four core features of HIEP, and Leap 1 of the Malaysian Education Development Plan 2015-2025 (Higher Education). The study's results reveal the significant potential of integrating DPRK into the implementation of HIEP. The impressive 78.1% potential integration of all nine principles to enhance the four construct characteristics of HIEP underscores its importance. Specifically, 36 out of 46 best practices were identified as suitable for integration into HIEP aspirations, highlighting the urgent necessity of this approach. In conclusion, this study found that DPRK deserves to be dignified as a HIEP quality empowerment module and officially practised in national and global higher education systems.

Keywords: Higher Education; High-Impact Educational Practices; Education Policy; Rabbani; Kelantan

1. Introduction

The higher education system in Malaysia has made significant progress in the 21st century. Focused efforts have been made to develop the potential of students and graduates in line with the National Philosophy of Education. This objective has been successfully achieved through the systematic development of students' potential, as evidenced by the Malaysian Education Development Plan 2015-2025 (Higher Education) or MEB (HE) (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2024; Sirat & Wan, 2022; Zain et al., 2017; Ahmad, 2017).

The Malaysian Ministry of Education (MoE) has described holistic, integrated, and constructive curriculum development as the 1st Leap in MEB (HE). Additionally, the MoE aims to enhance individual student potential with six main attributes or domains: ethics and spirituality, leadership skills, national identity, thinking skills, language skills, and integrated knowledge (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015). Ultimately, this approach is intended to produce holistically well-rounded graduates with entrepreneurial and balanced characteristics in line with the National Education Philosophy (Sirat & Wan, 2022; Ismail et al., 2021; Munusamy & Hashim, 2019; Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015).

The Ministry of Education (MoE) has established a comprehensive and integrated curriculum formation initiative as its primary strategy (Strategy A). Each higher education provider (HEP) is

responsible for developing a comprehensive, integrated, and well-aligned curriculum by focusing on using High-Impact Educational Practices (HIEP). HIEP emphasises cognitive clarity, entrepreneurial skills, and learning through experience and innovation (Sirat & Wan, 2022; MOE 2015: 81).

In line with the objectives of the MEB (HE) 2015-2025 agenda, the Kelantan State Government introduced the Kelantan Rabbani Education Policy (DPRK) in 2018. DPRK aims to optimise students' ethical and spiritual values in Kelantan. DPRK consists of 9 principles of Rabbani education and 46 best practices that are the essential foundations for its success (Zaman et al., 2022; Umar et al., 2020). This initiative is designed to support the Kelantan State Government's comprehensive planning to enhance the Islamic-oriented populace's way of life (Umar et al., 2020; Awang et al., 2018; Yusoff, 2017; Mohamad et al., 2016).

Thus, this study aims to discuss the potential empowerment of HIEP aspirations by integrating DPRK content. By empowering this, the study is optimistic that the goal of producing holistically well-rounded and integrated graduates can be effectively pursued. Overall, the commitment to developing the potential of students and graduates is a shared trust and responsibility of every stakeholder in the field of education.

1.1 Vision and Aspiration of High-Impact Educational Practices (HIEP)

To achieve the objectives of the primary leap of MEB (HE), the MoE published the High-Impact Educational Practices (HIEP) document in 2018. This document guides HEPs in implementing holistic and integrated curriculum development initiatives in their respective institutions (Sirat & Wan, 2022).

Based on its aspirations, the implementation of HIEP aims to produce holistic, knowledgeable and ethical graduates in line with the National Higher Education Philosophy. Practically speaking, the intention supports the independence of the HEP initiative in Malaysia to develop an integrated and quality curriculum guided by Strategy A.

In Strategy A, the MoE has set a three-phase action plan for the implementation of the initiative to develop a holistic and integrated curriculum (MOE 2015: 85). Phase 1 (2015) started by introducing HIEP, learning based on experience and the application of entrepreneurial attitudes in public and private higher education institutions. Phase 2 (2016-2020) helps HEP strengthen the general course production framework across the curriculum. Finally, in Phase 3 (2021-2025), MoE will support HEP in developing an integrated curriculum.

To ensure the achievement of HIEP objectives, the MoE has specified four characteristics of the HIEP construct that need to be applied in forming a curriculum.

Table 1. Four Characteristics of High-Impact Educational Practices (HIEP) Construct.

No	Characteristics of HIEP	Description
1	Knowledge About Culture and the Physical or Real World	Focus on engaging students in exploring significant, challenging, and contemporary issues.
2	Intellectual and Practical Skills	Across the curriculum in stages through handling challenging projects or cases and using performance-based assessment standards.
3	Personal and Social Responsibility	Engaged with active participation in a community full of diversity and real-world challenges
4	Integrated and Applied Learning	Highlighted through applying knowledge, skills, and a sense of responsibility in addressing complex problems and novel situations.

Sumber: Department of Higher Education (2019)

Referring to Table 1, each Higher Education Provider (HEP) must design a comprehensive curriculum to nurture well-informed, empathetic, and adaptable students who can effectively navigate the challenges of today's world (Department of Higher Education, 2019). According to the aim of this study, all four components of the HIEP model could be effectively incorporated with the aspirations of the DPRK. This integration process will enhance the development of the HIEP and subsequently elevate the quality of the integrated curriculum planned by the Ministry of Education.

Regarding its content, HIEP's first, third, and fourth features discuss the conceptual aspects of human development compared to its second feature, which focuses more on performance assessment aspects. Nevertheless, the assessment is still holistic and covers cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects in line with the National Education Philosophy and national curriculum regulations (MoE, 2017).

Accordingly, the Ministry of Education (2017) also states that planned curriculum development programs should enhance students' overall development. In line with this goal, the DPRK has introduced the concept of nobility more comprehensively.

In addition, the aspirational quality of the HIEP construct has been based on six main attributes, as outlined in Leap 1, MEB (HE). Table 2 describes the six attributes.

Table 2. Six Main Attributes of Students and Graduates (Higher Education).

No.	Attributes	Description
1	Ethics and Spirituality	Ethical and moral, having a solid spirituality, loving and caring, embracing sustainable development and a healthy lifestyle.
2	Leadership Skills	Effective communicator, emotionally intelligent and able to interact across cultures. Responsible, competitive, tenacious, and confident.
3	National identity	Develop a strong sense of national identity and comprehend the country's aspirations.
4	Language skills	Skilled in Malay and English and eager to learn another global language.
5	Thinking skills	Appreciate diverse opinions, think critically and innovatively, have problem-solving skills, and be entrepreneurial.
6	Knowledge	Mastering the field of choice, able to utilise, connect, and Apply the knowledge learned and appreciate art, culture, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Source: (MoE, 2015)

In Table 2, the MoE has classified the six attributes into two categories. Attributes 1, 2, and 3 are categorised under "Moral" (Ethical and Moral), while attributes 4, 5, and 6 fall under "Knowledge" (Knowledge and Skills). The combination of these six attributes will contribute to shaping students and graduates in a holistic and integrated manner (MoE, 2015).

Ultimately, the combination of all four features of HIEP aims to form a curriculum that trains students to become knowledgeable, competitive, and committed individuals who contribute to society. This justifies the parallelism of HIEP's aspirations with the DPRK's vision and aspirations.

1.2 Kelantan Rabbani Education Policy (DPRK) And Human Development Aspirations

The implementation of DPRK is a commitment of the State of Kelantan as a dynamic Islamic Education Hub. Referring to the rationale for implementing the DPRK, the Kelantan State Government aims to guide the determination of the direction of national education in the future. (Zaman et al. 2022; Umar et al. 2020; Mohamad et al. 2016).

The DPRK construct has been developed using nine principles of Rabbani education and 46 best practices that form the core standards of its success (Umar et al., 2020). DPRK aspires to support the integrated planning of the Kelantan State administration to strengthen the way of life of Islamic-oriented people. (Umar et al. 2020; Mohamad et al. 2016).

Based on its philosophy, implementing the DPRK focuses on integrating the scope of Islamic education into community life. Technically, the DPRK aims to officially apply Rabbani's philosophy

to Kelantan's entire community education platform (Zaman et al., 2022; Umar et al., 2020). After all, the DPRK can be understood in Table 3.

Table 3. List of Principles and Best Practices in DPRK

Principles DPRK		
Principles (P)	Description	Best Practices
P1 Knowledge Purposeful of Allah	The knowledge demanded is based on and directed to God.	1.1 Knowledge belongs to Allah SWT 1.2 Knowledge Sourced from al-Quran and al-Sunna 1.3 Sincerely Knowledgeable For God's sake 1.4 Purposeful for the Hereafter
P2 Priority of Knowledge & Jurisprudence	Education aims to produce individuals who understand the priority level of knowledge and achieve expertise in their field.	2.1 The Priority of <i>Fardhu 'Ain</i> Knowledge 2.2 Studies According to the Sequence of Knowledge 2.3 Faqih Individual Development 2.4 Integration of <i>Aqli</i> and <i>Naqli</i> Knowledge
P3 Becoming a Noble Person	Educate individuals towards the formation of a civilized and virtuous personality.	3.1 Love of Knowledge 3.2 Practicing Religious Orders 3.3 Noble Personality 3.4 Social Life 3.5 Environmental Concerns
P4 Practice & Spread of Knowledge	Translating knowledge in daily life and spreading it to others.	4.1 Cultivation of Knowledge 4.2 Appreciation of Knowledge 4.3 Knowledge Sharing 4.4 Wide Spread of Knowledge 4.5 The Dignity of Malay Language as a Language of Knowledge and the Improvement of Mastery of Other Languages
P5 Continuous Learning & Study	Improve knowledge and skills and cultivate study continuously	5.1 Improvement of Potential and Skills 5.2 Application of Science and Technology 5.3 Educator's Human Soul Development 5.4 Cultivation of Teaching Practice 5.5 Implementation of Continuous Research
P6 Development & Community Reformation	Educating individuals towards developing society and doing reform.	6.1 Holistic and Balanced Development 6.2 Discretion Wisely 6.3 Obligation to Implement ' <i>Amar Ma'aruf Nahi Mungkar</i> 6.4 Learning the Local Language 6.5 Skilled in Problem-Solving 6.6. Continuous Scientific Measurement

P7	Shared Responsibility	Individuals who are aware of the nature of responsibility in developing themselves and society together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7.1 Parental Role Priority 7.2 cooperation between government, private and community institutions 7.3 leadership and competence of educational leaders 7.4 administration enlivens education 7.5 sustainability of fund management 7.6 strengthening of federal practices
P8	Corresponding to Current Reality	Education that produces individuals who are sensitive to the latest developments that move in line with Islamic patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8.1 Sufficiency of <i>Fardhu Kifayah</i> Needs in Life 8.2 Use of the Latest Technology 8.3 Strengthening Current Teaching and Learning Practices 8.4 Understanding the Reality of Life
P9	Sustainability of Knowledge	The quality of education that emphasizes the validity of sources, integration and continuous change of disciplines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9.1 Integration of Reason with Revelation 9.2 Integration of Knowledge Disciplines 9.3 The Need to Fulfill Universal Human Nature 9.4 Recognition of Past Scientific Contributions 9.5 Knowledge Documentation 9.6 Quality Control of Educational Institutions 9.7 Guarantee of Source Validity

Source: Umar et al. 2020

Based on Table 1, the combination of the 9 DPRK principles and the list of 46 best practices (BPs) that form the core standards for each principle demonstrates DPRK's commitment and consistency in pursuing a holistic and integrated human development agenda. (Zaman et al. 2023; Zaman et al. 2022; al-Ghazali 1999; Hawwa 1994).

Accordingly, each of the best practices listed has been documented as a reference according to the source category, meaning, description of best practices, exemplary models and some practical recommendations to achieve the results of the implementation of the nine principles set (Zaman et al., 2022; Umar et al., 2020). In conclusion, the combination of the 9 DPRK principles is very significant with the aspirations of the four characteristics of the HIEP construct and the six attributes of students and graduates in MEB (HE).

2. Research Methodology

This study is presented to discuss the potential empowerment of HIEP aspirations through applying the Kelantan Rabbani Education Policy initiated by the Kelantan State Government in 2018. Using the thematic content analysis method, this qualitative study examines the level of parallelism between the aspirations of the nine principles of the DPRK, four characteristics of the HIEP construct core and Leap 1 of the Malaysian Education Development Plan 2015-2025 (Higher Education). The empowerment spaces of HIEP and MEB (HE) constructs can be identified explicitly through the parallel mapping process.

In a more specific context, this study focuses mainly on the potential discourse of HIEP empowerment based on ethical and spiritual attributes in Leap 1, MEB (HE). The details in the DPRK principles will be associated with the HIEP goals and moral and spiritual qualities. In addition, the other five characteristics of MEB (HE) are also discussed in parallel with the main focus of empowerment.

To strengthen the analysis process, this study also refers to scientific works in human development, which consist of books of interpretation, hadith lectures, journals, and other relevant primary reference sources. Overall, this study tries to integrate the aspirations of human development in the DPRK with the aspirations of the HIEP and MEB (HE) constructs in line with the National Education Philosophy.

3. Findings

After analyzing HIEP and DPRK discourse, this study identified that the first feature of HIEP, which emphasizes knowledge about culture and the physical world, aligns with the contents of P1, P2, P5, P6, and P8 of DPRK. The second feature of HIEP, focusing on intellectual and practical skills, is aligned with the content of P2, P5, P6, and P9. The third feature of HIEP, which emphasizes personal and social responsibility, aligns with the content of P3, P4, P6, and P7. Finally, HIEP's fourth feature, centred on integrated and applied learning, parallels the content of P5, P6, P8, and P9.

The details of HIEP's alignment with the principles of the DPRK can be understood through its mapping in Table 3.

Table 4: Mapping DPRK Principles to the Four Characteristics of the HIEP Construct

No.	The Characteristics Of High-Impact Educational Practices	DPRK principles (P)								
		P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9
		Best Practice (BP)								
1	Knowledge About Culture and the Physical or Real World	1,3,4	3,4			1,5	1,4,5		3,4	
2	Intellectual and Practical Skills		2,3,4			1,2,5	1,5,6			6,7
3	Personal and Social Responsibility			1,2,3,4,5	1,2,3,4		2,3	1,2,3,4		
4	Integrated and Applied Learning					1,2,5	1,2,5		2,3,4	1,2,3
	Total	3/4	3/4	5/5	4/5	3/5	6/6	4/6	3/4	5/7
	Percentage of Integration Potential (%)	75	75	100	80	60	100	67	75	71

Source: Researcher Analysis

According to Table 3, all 9 DPRK principles and 36 BP can be integrated as HIEP empowerment elements. The empowerment potential is determined by matching BP DPRK principles with the description of the four characteristics of HIEP. Parallelism and matching potential can be seen in the

(Total) and (Percentage of Integration Potential) columns. For example, P3 shows that all five BPs contained therein are appropriately integrated with the third characteristic of HIEP. Similarly to P6, all six BPs have the potential to be applied to empower the characteristics of HIEP. In this regard, P3 - Becoming a Noble Person and P6 - Community Development & Development recorded a rate of 100% parallelism and integration potential to HIEP.

In a different context, the first feature of HIEP has the most potential for empowerment opportunities. It covers 5 P and 12 BP simultaneously. Next, the third feature also has a degree of parallelism covering 4 P and 15 BP. The fourth feature has a degree of parallelism covering 4 P and 12 BP. Finally, the second feature of HIEP has the potential for empowerment through 4 P and 11 BP.

Overall, the potential integration of all nine principles and 46 best practices of DPRK into the four construct characteristics of HIEP is 78.1 per cent. Thus, this study is optimistic that empowering HIEP based on the DPRK will help HEP improve the holistic and integrated curriculum development process in line with the National Education Philosophy and MEB (HE) aspirations.

4. Discussion

Essentially, all Malaysians are responsible for making national education a success. Without the commitment of all levels of society, the aspirations of MEB (HE) 2015-2025 and HIEP to produce quality graduates for Malaysia will be challenging (Zain et al., 2017). Accordingly, the successful implementation of the MEB (HE) 2015-2025 that can be witnessed today is the result of the commitment and cooperation of all parties.

4.1 DPRK-Based HIEP Construct Empowerment Proposal

Over the past decade of implementing the MEB (HE) 2015-2025, it has become clear that we need additional support initiatives to enhance the quality of achieving our goals. These support initiatives, whether through integration or intervention, are efforts encouraged by the National Education Philosophy (Ismail et al., 2021).

Hence, this study suggests empowering the HIEP construct as an indication of commitment to advancing the national education development agenda through the National Education Philosophy. Table 5 provides more information about this proposal.

Table 5. DPRK-Based HIEP Construct Empowerment Proposal

No	The Characteristics of HIEP	Description
1	Knowledge About Culture and the Physical or Real World	Original Description: “Focus on engaging students in exploring significant, challenging, and contemporary issues.”
		Empowerment Description:

“Focusing on engaging students in discussing the solution of contemporary issues related to societal benefit through a continuous research approach, integrating reason and revelation, and aiming for the pleasure of Allah SWT.”

(DPRK source: P1-BP 1,3,4; P2-BP 3,4; P5-BP 1,5; P6-BP 1,4,5; P8-BP 3,4)

2 Intellectual and Practical Skills

Original Description:

“Across the curriculum in stages through handling challenging projects or cases and using performance-based assessment standards.”

Empowerment Description:

“Across the curriculum, knowledge is prioritized, and challenging projects are implemented by integrating revelation and logic, using technology and continuous scientific measurement standards.”

(DPRK source: P2-BP 2,3,4; P5-BP 1,2,5; P6-BP 1,5,6; P9-BP 6,7)

3 Personal and Social Responsibility

Original Description:

“Engaged actively in a community full of diversity and real-world challenges.”

Empowerment Description:

“Focusing on developing a noble personality committed to applying knowledge for the betterment of the community in a holistic and balanced manner.”

(DPRK source: P3-BP 1,2,3,4,5; P4-BP 1,2,3,4; P6-BP 2,3; P7-BP 1,2,3,4)

4 Integrated and Applied Learning

Original Description:

“Highlighted through applying knowledge, skills, and a sense of responsibility in addressing complex problems and novel situations.”

Empowerment Description:

“Focusing on utilizing knowledge and skills to conduct continuous research to address universal human life challenges by integrating reason and revelation.”

(DPRK source: P5-BP 1,2,5; P6-BP 1,2,5; P8-BP 2,3,4; P9-BP 1,2,3)

Source: Researcher Analysis; Zaman et al. 2022; Umar et al. 2020

In accordance with Table 5, this study presents the proposed focus on empowering the four HIEP construct features. It includes the formulation of 36 best practices (BP) based on the nine principles of the DPRK. Each BP is aligned with the original description of the four HIEP characteristics. The combination of BPs used in the formulation process is stated after the empowerment description. Related BP combinations can also be referred to in Table 4. “Mapping DPRK Principles to the Four Characteristics of the HIEP Construct”.

Regarding the empowerment proposal mentioned above, incorporating holistic elements guided by the DPRK is a more comprehensive approach. The holistic approach is deemed more precise and objective, aligning with the teachings of Islam. The emphasis on holistic values within the DPRK prioritizes the position of the Quran and hadith over rationale. Therefore, any endeavours to address contemporary life challenges must be guided by Islamic principles (Zaman et al., 2023; Jaafar & Zaman, 2023; Ahmad, 2019; Lubis et al., 2019; Othma, 2017).

Overall, the empowerment recommendations in Table 5 aim to improve the human capital development framework quality based on the Rabbani concept. In other words, the idea of Rabbani emphasises every consideration or action in life, making obedience to Allah SWT a guideline (Zaman et al., 2023; Baba, 2006; Kamri, 2002). Its dimensions include the development of knowledge, faith-strengthening, worship empowerment, the demand for proselytising to defend Islam and the development of an outstanding generation (Zaman et al., 2022; Ismail et al., 2020; Duruzah, 1964; al-Qawsi 2006).

Accordingly, the holistic human capital development criteria contain three main approaches. The first is the consolidation of knowledge. Second, the implementation of education builds self-identity and strengthens faith. Third, preaching activities to spread the understanding of Islam and form organizational skills (Hawwa, 1994). Through this approach, responsible, trustworthy and consistent attitudes will be born in the life of every Muslim individual (Tamuri, 2021; Hamid & Fauzi, 2018; al-Ghazali, 1999; Hawwa, 1994).

In conclusion, as presented in this study, the HIEP empowerment initiative based on the DPRK is an integral part of the commitment to empowering human capital development aligned with Islam's divine and spiritual values. It is crucial for education authorities to carefully examine this initiative to ensure that it aligns with the vision and mission of the country's education and contributes to its successful realization.

5. Conclusion

The findings of in-depth research on the educational discourse of graduates and students in Leap 1, MEB (HE), and the four aspects of the HIEP construct demonstrate its potential for empowerment

through DPRK. This empowerment initiative is consistent with the National Education Philosophy, which requires the dedication of all parties to achieve the advancement of quality education for the benefit of Malaysia. Therefore, the HIEP empowerment efforts outlined in this study are a crucial agenda that demands strong commitment from all parties. It is acknowledged that comprehensive human capital development efforts will be more effective and persuasive when supported by educational policies such as the DPRK. Generally, the empowerment focus of the HIEP construct, aligned with the aspirations of the DPRK, should be acknowledged and respected in advancing comprehensive and integrated education to cultivate the human capital required by society and the nation. Ultimately, this initiative is hoped to be developed and implemented in harmony with the National Education Philosophy and MEB (HE) aspirations 2015-2025.

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