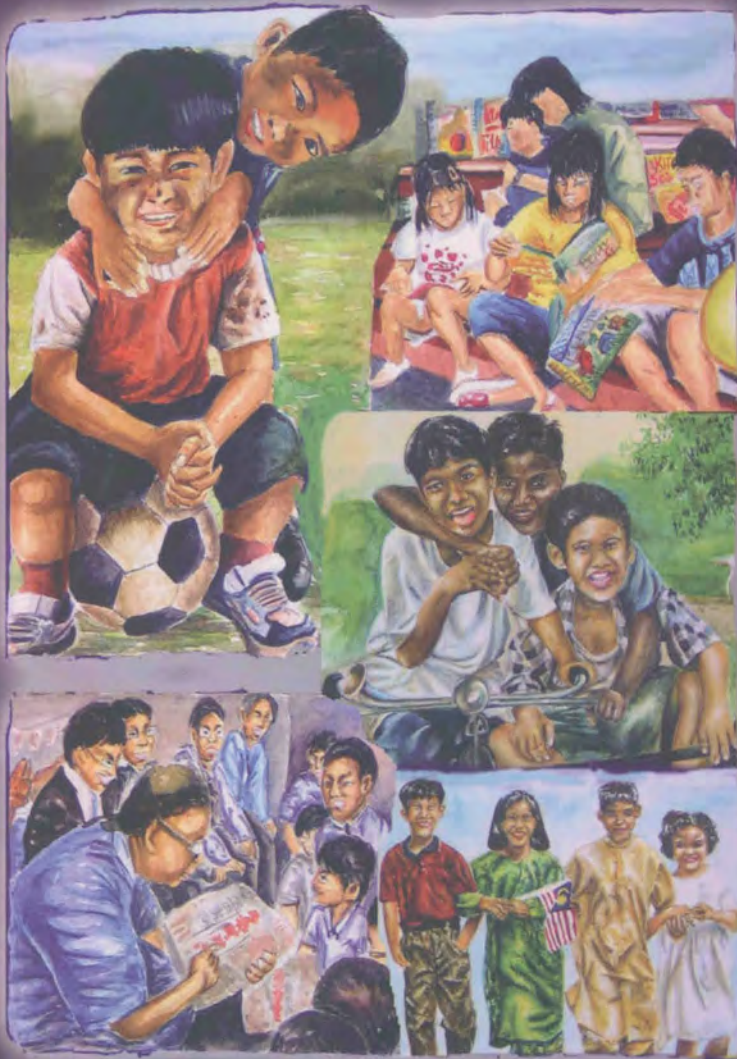


Research on
**Knowledge and Practice
of Human Rights
in Secondary Schools**



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of Human Rights
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Preface

The Education Working Group is one of the four working groups formed since the establishment of the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia in 2000 under the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia Act 1999 (Act 597). This Working Group is deemed essential to the work of the Commission because one of the four functions of the Commission is to “promote awareness of and provide education in relation to human rights” (p. 7). This function is in tandem with the competence and responsibility of national human rights institutions stated in the Paris Principles, namely, “to assist in the formulation of programmes, for the teaching of, and research into, human rights and to take part in these executions in schools, universities and professional circles.” (Sothi & Ramadas, 1999, p. 259)

To enable the Education Working Group to carry out this function, one of the committees formed in 2002 is the “Human Rights Education in School” which has three members nominated by the Ministry of Education. They are from the School Division, the Teacher Training Division and the Curriculum Development Centre. The other members comprise three academicians from public universities and three representatives from non-governmental agencies. The Chairperson is a Commissioner while the officers of the Education Working Group act as the secretariat.

At the onset, this Committee agreed that it was necessary to know the state of human rights practice in school as well as the extent of students’, teachers’ and administrators’ knowledge of human rights for the Committee to plan, recommend and conduct human rights education in schools.

The original plan to conduct the survey in primary and secondary schools was modified to confine the research to secondary schools for several reasons. One of them was the large number of subjects/participants involved if the sample was to be representative of the school population; the sample size would be too large as an initial project for the Committee. Furthermore, this study could be replicated in primary schools at a later date.

This research would not have been possible without the full cooperation at the various levels of the Ministry of Education, Malaysia ranging from the approval to conduct this research by the Educational Planning and Research Division, through granting permission by the State Departments of Education to conduct the research in schools in their State to the willingness of the schools to take part as respondents of the study. The schools were very gracious and accommodating and often went out of their way to ensure that we had the information needed such as giving us another time slot when it was not convenient for the subjects to

answer the questionnaire.

The Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) would also like to thank all the researchers for taking time off from their work to help us plan and design the research instruments, to travel to the various schools to conduct the research, to discuss the data analysis, and to comment and improve upon this report. Last but not least, SUHAKAM would like to accord its gratefulness to the students, teachers and school administrators who supported our endeavour by agreeing to be the respondents of this study. To everyone who had assisted and/or cooperated with us to make this study possible, we say “thank you”.

SUHAKAM hopes that the findings of this research will not only be useful to the Commission in understanding the situation in schools, in terms of human rights knowledge and practices, but they will also help others, especially the Ministry of Education, Malaysia.

Chiam Heng Keng

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Synopsis

This research was aimed to assess the students', teachers' and school administrators' knowledge of the child's rights and the extent practices in schools that pertain to human rights were upheld in schools. To achieve these objectives, 40 secondary schools in various parts of Malaysia were selected according to certain criteria for participation in this study. In each of the schools, about 80 Form II and 80 Form V students were selected as respondents. The teacher sample comprised all the teachers in these 40 schools while the administrator sample were the principals, senior assistants (administration), senior assistants (students' affairs), senior assistants (co-curricular activities) and afternoon supervisors.

Three questionnaires were designed to collect the data. Most of the items on these questionnaires are similar. These questionnaires were administered to the students, teachers and administrators by the researchers with the help of research assistants.

The responses of 5754 students, 2132 teachers and 142 administrators were analyzed using the SPSS and the analyzed data were clustered into 4 groups for discussion; these groups are knowledge of human rights, children's rights and responsibilities, fundamental rights in the Federal Constitution and practices that impinge upon human rights.

Human Rights: General Knowledge

More than 70% of the students, except for the students in the technical schools, did not know of the existence of the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM). However, the vast majority of the teachers and administrators had knowledge of SUHAKAM's existence but the percentage of them who knew that SUHAKAM was established by an Act of Parliament was lower.

Although the government had acceded to the Convention on the Right of the Child about a decade ago, less than 10% of the teachers and administrators had been given information of this Convention. Therefore, it is not surprising that more than 80% of them had the misconception that the Convention on the Rights of the Child had been passed by the Parliament.

Children's Rights and Responsibilities

The vast majority of the students, teachers and administrators agreed that children should be given the freedom to express ideas and opinions. However, most of them failed to realize that this freedom comes along with responsibility. More of the 30% of the students felt it was not wrong to call their classmates names as long as they are not hurt physically and about 40% of them approved of teachers using ridicule to motivate students to study. They failed to realize that while they have the freedom of expression, they cannot use it to demean a person or damage others' reputation. Furthermore upholding the dignity of others is a fundamental human right.

Teachers and administrators too approved of teachers using ridicule as a motivational device. The percentage of administrators approving this motivational device is much lower than the percentage of teachers. Although the majority of them were for children to be given the freedom of expression, some of them too failed to realize that ridicule is an abuse of the freedom of expression

Students seemed to have certain liberties. The majority of the students, teachers and administrators claimed that students are given the liberty to choose the clubs and societies to join.

Students, teachers and administrators did not differ in their attitudes towards the rights of the disabled. The vast majority of them agreed that children with disabilities should be placed in special schools. This preference of disabled children to be in special schools shows that they are not aware of the rights of children with disabilities (Article 23 in the CRC). However, this preference could also be influenced by their experiences such as the school is not disabled friendly and integrated programmes for the disabled are often not supported by appropriate personnel and facilities.

Human Rights and School Practices

Both teachers and administrators were for caning as a means to discipline students. While the majority of the teachers wanted to be empowered to cane students with problematic behaviour, a much lower percentage of the administrators was in favour of this empowerment.

Teachers were reluctant to give students a participatory role in selecting their leaders. Most of the teachers wanted class monitors to be selected by them. A even higher percentage of them wanted the principal and teachers to have the full authority to select prefects. The percentage of administrators who wanted students to be selected by teachers and the school authority is lower. While

most students were in favour of prefects being selected by the principal and teachers, the vast majority of them wanted students and not teachers to select class monitors.

More than 60% of the students and about 50% of the teachers claimed that discrimination is practised in their schools. Both students and teachers alleged that discrimination is often based on gender, race, religion, social standing and economic status. For students, discrimination based on academic ability is common.

Fundamental Rights in the Federal Constitution

Most of the students and almost all the teachers and administrators knew of the non-discrimination provision on the ground of gender, race and religion in the Federal Constitution.

Recommendations

SUHAKAM would like to make the following recommendations:

1. The Ministry of Education makes sure that teachers, administrators, school support staff and officers in the Ministry have a good understanding of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to ensure that they do not violate rights due to the child.

To enable teachers, school administrators and officers in the Ministry of Education have a good understanding of the CRC, it is recommended that teacher training institutions, at the college and university level, include the study of this human rights instrument in their programmes.

2. The rights of the child that teacher training institutions should heed and give greater focus are:
 - a) the rights of the disabled.
 - b) freedom of expression and its responsibilities
 - c) the right of the child to participation
 - d) the right to dignity and identity
 - e) non-discrimination
 - f) the right to protection from physical and mental abuse
 - g) the right to quality education

3. The curriculum for technical teacher education and the environment in technical schools need to be studied carefully to understand the apparently more aggressive tendencies in teachers and students.
4. Schools should give students a greater participatory role in selecting their leaders. If they are not given the opportunity to be trained to make good decisions during their schooldays, then they may not have the skills to do so after leaving school.
5. The Ministry of Education identifies best practices to help students, especially problematic and delinquent students, manage their behaviour and develop their potential.
6. The Ministry of Education and schools design activities and programmes to help students understand their rights and responsibilities and respect the rights of others.
7. SUHAKAM and/or the Ministry of Education carry out studies to look into discrimination practices in schools and ways to minimize these practices.

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**CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION**



INTRODUCTION

Every human being wants to be treated with respect and dignity. Human beings also aspire for their wellbeing and effective functioning in the community and society of which they are members. The need to function effectively is inborn as everyone craves after high self-esteem. As all human beings are created by God, everyone therefore has the right to her/his wellbeing and effective functioning that encompasses freedom from harm, right to work, and the right to be treated with dignity and respect. These rights, which exist from the time when God creates men and women, are now classified together under the concept of human rights.

In school, there are practices that threaten the wellbeing of the students, teachers and administrators. For instance, bullying, assault and gang fights threaten students' sense of security. Teachers' security is threatened when students challenge their authority and/or maliciously damage their cars. Likewise administrators' security and effective functioning can be diminished by parents who question their authority or threaten to take legal actions against the school for disciplining their children.

Vandalism, which is widespread in schools, is an act of aggression. Students who engage in vandalism are infringing Article 17 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, that is, the right of the school to own property and, in destroying the school's property, students are depriving the school of it. Other forms of violations of human rights in school include extortion, molesting, sexual harassment and sexual abuse. In reality, many of the students' misdeeds in school pertain to violation of human rights.

Although students, especially delinquent students, violate the rights of other students, teachers and even administrators, the probability of adults infringing the rights of students is much higher. School students, being minors, are often denied of their rights. For instance, while adults can demand to be treated with dignity and respect, children are deprived of such rights. Often adults and even students considered it is permissible for teachers to yell and humiliate students but when students answer teachers rudely, their behaviour tantamount to indiscipline and warrants punishment.

To protect children so that they can survive and develop, the General Assembly of the United Nations on 20 November 1989 adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. On July 19, 1991, following the World Summit for Children held at the UN Headquarters on 29-30 September 1990, Dato Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, then the Prime Minister of Malaysia, signed the Declaration in a ceremony in Kuala Lumpur. On 17 February 1995, Malaysia ratified the Declaration on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) with reservations of 8 articles, including Article 1 and 15.

Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Declaration of Rights of the Child, much less known than the CRC, was proclaimed in 1959, thirty years before the adoption of CRC by the UN General Assembly. This Declaration presents 10 principles related to “the wellbeing of every child without distinction or discrimination on account of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status ...” (United Nations in the Field of Human Rights, p. 232). Briefly, Articles 2-10 pertain to:

Article 2: Special protection ... to enable the child to develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually, and socially in a healthy and normal environment...

Article 3: Entitlement to a name and nationality

Article 4: Benefits of social security

Article 5: Special treatment to children with physical, mental and social handicap

Article 6: Full and harmonious development, if possible under the care and responsibility of parents. If not, then society and public authorities have to provide adequate care.

Article 7: Entitlement to free and compulsory education, at least in the elementary stages

Article 8: The child in all circumstances be among the first to receive protection and relief

Article 9: Protection from all forms of neglect and not subject to trafficking

Article 10: Protection from practices which may foster racial, religious and other forms of discrimination

This Declaration can be regarded as the forerunner of the CRC but the Convention definitely differs from the Declaration as it views the child as an active subject of rights and not merely as the object of special protection and assistance. Thus, besides the rights to survival, protection and development, the Convention also contains the rights of the child to participation. The rights of the child to survival, protection development and participation are contained in Articles 1-41 of the Convention. In addition to the rights of the child, the Convention states measures of implementation (Part II, Articles 42-45) such as the obligation of the States

Parties to ensure the implementation of the rights contained in the Convention and to make these rights widely known to adults, children and the public.

The general principles enunciated in the Convention include non-discrimination; the obligation to take the best interest of the child into account; the respect of the child's opinions; and the right to life, survival and development. All members of the United Nations, except two, have signed and ratified the Convention.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

On December 19, 1948, the General Assembly meeting in Paris adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. States are not bound to carry out the Declaration and give effect to human rights but it sets forth the basic human rights and fundamental freedoms to which all men and women everywhere in the world are entitled, without discrimination. The UDHR consists of a preamble and 30 articles; articles 3-21 pertain to civil and political rights and articles 22-27 relate to economic, social and cultural rights. The rights encompass the following:

Article 1 defines the basic assumptions of the Declaration. It declares that the right to liberty and equality is the birthright of every man and woman.

Article 2 sets out the basic principles of equality and non-discrimination and provides the provision for the United Nations to promote observance of these rights and freedoms.

Article 3 proclaims the three fundamental rights: the right to life, the right to liberty and the right to security.

Articles 3-21 pertain to civil and political rights such as the right to life, liberty and security of person; freedom from torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment; the right to an effective judicial remedy; freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention and exile; the right to fair trial; freedom from arbitrary interference with privacy; the right to own property; freedom of thought, conscience and religion; freedom of opinion and expression; the right of association and of assembly; the right to take part in government; and the right of equal access to public service.

Articles 23-27 relate to economic, social and cultural rights such as the right to work; the right to rest and leisure; the right to a standard of living adequate for health and wellbeing; the right to education; and the right to participate in the cultural life of the community.

Although the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is not a treaty and member states are not bound to observe the Declaration, nonetheless, this document is the basis of all human rights treaties and covenants.

Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM)

The Human Rights Commission of Malaysia, which is widely known in Malaysia by its acronym, "SUHAKAM" (Suruhanjaya Hak Asasi Manusia), was established by an Act of Parliament, the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia Act 1999, Act 597. This Act was gazetted on September 9, 1999 and the first batch of Commissioners took office on 24 April 2000. Currently, the third batch of Commissioners is in office as Commissioners are appointed for a term of two years but they are eligible for re-appointment.

The functions and powers of the Commission are stated in Article 4 (I) of the Act. Among the four functions of the Commission is "to promote awareness of and provide education in relation to human rights" (p.7). For the purpose of discharging this function, the Commission is empowered to "promote awareness of human rights and to undertake research by conducting programmes, seminars and workshops and to disseminate and distribute the results of such research" (p.7).

Being charged to promote awareness, provide education on human rights and carry out research pertaining to human rights, SUHAKAM embarked on this first initiative to ascertain the extent of awareness of human rights among students, teachers and school administrators and the status of human rights practices in schools. The principal reasons for undertaking this research are hence as follows:

- i) Since Malaysia has signed and ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the States Parties are obliged to make known to children and adults the rights contained in the CRC. Therefore, it is essential to assess students, teachers' and school administrators' knowledge and understanding of the CRC.
- ii) There is also the need to determine the practices in school that observe the child's rights as enshrined in the CRC.
- iii) Students', teachers' and school administrators' understanding of human rights need to be assessed.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To assess secondary school students' knowledge of human rights, especially

those pertaining to their lives as contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

2. To assess teachers' and principals' knowledge of human rights, especially those rights that are contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
3. To identify practices in school that promote students' wellbeing as a human being.
4. To identify practices in school that violate students' rights.

Summary

This research aims to provide information on the status of awareness or knowledge of human rights, especially of the rights contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and also of the practices in schools that contravene children's rights. The findings hopefully will stimulate students', teachers' and school administrators' awareness and interest in human rights, especially in the rights of the child, and contribute towards building up a human rights culture in school.

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**CHAPTER 2
THE STUDY**



THE STUDY

To achieve the objectives of this study and to guide the researchers in the planning and collection of the data, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What percentage of the students, teachers and administrator knows about the existence of the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM)?
2. What percentage of the students knows about the Convention of the Rights of the Child and their rights?
3. What percentage of the teachers knows about the Convention of the Rights of the Child and the rights of the child, especially those that are enshrined in the Convention?
4. What percentage of the school administrators knows about the Convention of the Rights of the Child and the rights of the child, especially those that are enshrined in the Convention?
5. What percentage of the students knows about their rights enshrined in the Federal Constitution?
6. What percentage of the teachers knows about their rights enshrined in the Federal Constitution?
7. What percentage of the administrators knows about their rights enshrined in the Federal Constitution?
8. To what extent is students' dignity being upheld in school?
9. What is the extent of students' participation in decision making in school?
10. To what extent is discrimination perceived to occur in school?

To obtain data to answer these questions, three questionnaires were constructed: one set of questions for students, another for teachers and a third set for school administrators. The next stage was the selection of the sample and lastly, the administration of the questionnaires to these three groups of subjects (namely, students, teachers and administrators).

Research Instrument

Based on the requirement of the research, three questionnaires were constructed principally to assess students', teachers' and school administrators' awareness/knowledge of human rights, especially the rights contained in the Convention of the Rights of the Child, and to identify practices that infringe upon human rights.

For comparisons to be made, the items in the three questionnaires were kept as similar as possible, especially those items to assess awareness or knowledge of human rights and to identify practices pertaining to human rights in schools.

To sustain interest and obtain the cooperation of the respondents, the questionnaires were kept as short as possible. To achieve this objective, only rights and practices that are very important to children's wellbeing in general were selected for inclusion in the questionnaires.

The questionnaire for students has 28 items. The first three items require students to provide background information such the name of the school, their grade level and gender. Ten items are on the rights contained in the CRC and they pertain especially to the right to compulsory education, the right of the disabled to education, the right to non-discrimination, the right to a name and dignity, the right to rest and recreation, freedom of expression of thoughts and ideas, the right to association (to become members of clubs and societies), the right to citizenship, the right to information and the right to protection from physical and mental abuse.

Table 2.1
Summary of the Student Questionnaire

<i>No. of items</i>	<i>Type of Information Solicited</i>	<i>Item Number in Questionnaire</i>
3	Background information	1, 2, 3
10	Human rights in the CRC	6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 15, 17, 19a, 19b, 19c
1	Human rights in the UDHR	11
3	Human rights in the Federal Constitution	18a, 18b, 18c
3	Understanding of human rights	10, 19d, 19c
2	General knowledge of human rights such as awareness of the existence of SUHAKAM	4, 5
1	Responsibilities	12
5	Practices in school that pertain to human rights	14, 16, 20, 21, 22

The student questionnaire has one item on a right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 2 on general information of human rights, 3 on understanding of human rights, 3 on human rights in the Federal Constitution (3 of them are parts of 1 item), 1 on responsibility and 5 on practices related to the rights in the CRC (Table 2.1). The two items on general aspects of human rights consist of 1 on awareness of SUHAKAM and another on the meaning of CRC. The items on practices concern mainly the right to participation (such as the right to select the

class leaders) caning, safety and discrimination.

The questionnaire designed for teachers has 31 items. Like the student questionnaire, the first three items require the respondents to provide information about them, including the subjects they taught. While the student questionnaire has 10 items on the rights in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the teacher questionnaire has only nine. The item, "Is it wrong to call your classmates 'stupid' as long as you do not hurt them physically?" is omitted in the teacher questionnaire.

Table 2.2
Summary of the Teacher Questionnaire

<i>No. of items</i>	<i>Type of Information Solicited</i>	<i>Item Number in Questionnaire</i>
3	Background information	1, 2, 3
9	Human rights in the CRC 24a, 24b, 24c	7, 8, 9, 10, 16, 18,
2	Human rights in the UDHR	12, 20
3	Human rights in the Federal Constitution	21a, 21b, 21c
3	Understanding of human rights	11, 24d, 24e
5	General knowledge of human rights such as awareness of the existence of SUHAKAM	4, 5, 6, 19, 23
6	Practices in school that pertain to human rights	13, 14, 15, 17, 22, 25

While the student questionnaire has two items on general knowledge related to human rights, there are 5 items on this aspect in the teacher questionnaire (Table 2.2). Besides the two items on awareness of SUHAKAM, there are two items on awareness of the CRC and one on integration of human rights education into school curriculum. Six items are on practices pertaining to the rights of the child. These items are the same as the items in the student questionnaire except that there are two items on caning instead of one. There are 2 items on the rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and 3 items that assess teachers' understanding of human rights.

The questionnaire, designed to obtain school administrators' awareness, knowledge and understanding of human rights, especially children's rights as contained in the Convention of the Rights of the Child, has 29 items. It differs from the teacher questionnaire only on two items. Firstly, there are only two items on background information while the teacher questionnaire has three items. Instead of 6 items on practice pertaining to human rights, the administrator questionnaire has five. The item on discrimination is omitted because the researchers surmised that administrators are unlikely to admit practice of

discrimination in their schools, even if it occurs.

Table 2.3
Summary of School Administrator Questionnaire

<i>No. of items</i>	<i>Type of Information Solicited</i>	<i>Item Number in Questionnaire</i>
2	Background information	1, 2,
9	Human rights in the CRC 23a, 23b, 23c	6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 17,
2	Human rights in the UDHR	11, 18
3	Human rights in the Federal Constitution	22a, 22b, 22c
3	Understanding of human rights	10, 23d, 23e
5	General knowledge of human rights such as awareness of the existence of SUHAKAM	3, 4, 5, 19, 21
5	Practices in school that pertain to human rights	12, 13, 14, 16, 20

All the items, except for 1 item in the student questionnaire, 3 in the teacher questionnaire and 1 in the administrator questionnaire, require respondents to chose either “yes” or “no”, “true” or “not true”, “agree” or “do not agree”. Generally, the respondents took 10-20 minutes to complete the questionnaire because it is short and the responses requires them merely to check (✓) the approximate box. Students who had encountered discrimination and wanted to relate their experiences took longer, another 10-20 minutes.

The questionnaires are colour coded for easy identification: blue for students, red for teachers and yellow for administrators. Respondents are not required to reveal their identity.

Sampling Procedure

As the school was the sampling unit, multi-stage cluster sampling procedure was to select subjects for this study. To ensure the sample is representative of the secondary school student population in the country, several steps were adopted. The first was to group the states in West Malaysia into North, Central, South and East zones and classify the schools (private schools were not included) according to zones as shown in Table 2.4. The second step involved recording the school population and the total number of schools in each of the zones and then computing the number of schools to be selected from each of them. Calculation of the number of schools to be chosen in each zone was based on a formula that yielded the figure that reflected proportionally the number of schools

in the respective zone. The number of schools to be selected in each zone is shown in Table 2.4. The total number of schools to be selected is 40.

Table 2.4
Number of Schools to be Selected in Each Zone

<i>Zone</i>	<i>States</i>	<i>No. of Schools to be selected</i>
North	Kedah, Penang & Perlis	6
Central	Perak, Selangor & Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur	11
South	Negeri Sembilan, Malacca & Johor	7
East	Pahang, Trengganu & Kelantan	8
Sabah	All divisions	4
Sarawak	All divisions	4
	Total	40

The next step was to compute the number of single sex schools, co-ed schools, agama schools (only national religious schools) and technical schools to be selected in each of the zones. The same principle was to ensure that the number of each type school to be selected in each zone reflected proportionally the number of these schools in each respective zone. The sum of the different types of schools in each zone should equal to the total number of schools that had been determined for the respective zone. The number of urban and rural schools in each type of schools in each zone had also to be computed to reflect appropriate representation. Since there are very few single sex schools in rural areas, none of them was included in the sample. Table 2.5 shows the number of schools, according to type of school, selected in each of the zones.

The teacher sample would consist of all the teachers in the schools selected while the administrator sample would compromise the principal, senior assistant in-charge-of administration, senior assistant-in-charge of student affairs, senior assistant-in-charge of co-curriculum and afternoon supervisor in each of the schools selected.

After determining the number of school to be selected according to type of school in each zone, the schools for conducting the research were randomly selected although accessibility and school size had to be considered; the schools selected had to have at least two classes of Form II and Form V.

Table 2.5
Number of Schools in the Sample According to Type of School and Zone

<i>Zone</i>	<i>Type of Schools</i>	<i>No of Schools</i>	<i>Total No of Schools</i>
North	Co-ed Single sex Technical Agama (National) Locality	2 (1 boys', 1 girls') 2 1 1 3 urban, 3 rural	6
Central	Co-ed Single sex Technical Agama (National) Locality	7 2 (1 boys', 1 girls') 1 1 7 urban, 4 rural	11
South	Co-ed Single sex Technical Agama (National) Locality	5 0 1 1 3 urban, 4 rural	7
East	Co-ed Single sex Technical Agama (National) Locality	6 0 1 1 4 urban, 4 rural	8
Sabah	Co-ed Single sex Technical Agama (National) Locality	2 2 (1 boys', 1 girls') 0 0 2 urban, 2 rural	4
Sarawak	Co-ed Single sex Technical Agama (National) Locality	4 0 0 0 2 urban, 2 rural	4
Total	Co-ed Single sex Technical Agama (National) Locality	26 (65.0%) 6 (15.0%) 4 (10.0%) 4 (10.0%) 21 urban, 19 rural	40

Sample

This study had three types of samples: students, teachers and administrators, representing the three types of population in schools.

a) Student Sample

The targeted sample size was 3200 Form II and 3200 Form V students because 80 students were to be selected from each of these grade levels in 40 schools. However, the number of students who participated in the study was 5754, comprising 2628 Form II students (82.1% of the target) and 3126 Form V students (97.7% of the target). The reduced sample size of Form II students was due to the fact that technical schools did not have Form II classes. Class size, especially in rural schools, was smaller than expected; the majority of them had less than 40 students in a class. In some schools, the class had less than 30 students. In these schools, three classes were selected instead of two.

Table 2.6 shows that the student sample comprised 3765 students from 26 co-ed schools, 969 from 6 single sex schools, 235 from 4 technical schools and 785 from 4 agama schools. The number of subjects in each type of school reflected the student population in the four different types of national or national type secondary schools. This is because the number of each of these four types of schools selected for participation reflected proportionally the number of the schools in each of the zones. Though the number of the technical and agama schools selected was the same, the number of subjects from technical schools was smaller. This is because technical schools do have Form II students; their student intakes are Form III and upwards.

More girls participated in the study; 55.5% of them as compared to 44.4% of the boys. Four students did not check their gender. In both urban and rural schools, more girls participated in the study. Analysis according to grade level also shows there were more girls in both levels (57.6% Form II and 53.7% Form V girls). This ratio of girls to boys reflected the population of boys and girls in schools.

Table 2.6
Number of Students by Gender, Type of School, Grade Level and Locality

Type of School		Locality		Form		Gender	
		Urban	Rural	FII	FV	M	F
Co-ed	N=3765 %=65.4	1848 49.1	1917 50.9	1821 48.4	1944 51.6	1578 41.9	2183 58.1
Single Sex	N=969 %=16.8	969 100	0 0	409 42.2	560 57.8	489 50.5	480 49.5
Technical	N=235 %= 4.1	68 28.9	167 71.1		235 100	148 63.0	87 37.0
Agama	N=785 %=13.6	141 18.0	644 82.0	398 50.7	387 49.3	341 43.4	444 56.6
Total	N=5754	3026 2728	52.6 47.4	2628 3126	45.7 54.3	2556 3194*	44.4 55.5

* 4 students did not indicate their gender

Table 2.7
Number of Male and Female Students by Urban-rural Locality and Grade Level

Sex	Urban		Rural		FII		FV		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
M	1324	43.8	1232	45.2	1111	42.3	1445	46.3	2556	44.5
F	1700	56.2	1494	54.8	1515	57.7	1679	53.7	3194	55.5
Total	3024	100	2726	100	2626	100	3124	100	5750 *	100

* 5754 students participated in the study and 4 did not indicate their gender

b) Teacher Sample

Two thousand one hundred and thirty two (2132) teachers participated in the study. Out of this total, 674 (31.8%) of them were males, 1445 (68.2%) were females and 13 did not indicate their gender. The predominance of female teachers was also seen in all the various types of schools except for the single sex schools (Table 2.8). However, the ratio of female to male teachers was lower in the technical schools, being 1.3 female teachers to every male teacher. In the co-ed and agama schools, the ratio was 3:1 and 1.8:1 respectively. The greater number of female teachers in the sample reflects the teacher population in Malaysia. The reason for a higher percentage of male teachers in the single sex

schools is not clear and neither are we sure if that this statistics reflects the teacher population in single sex schools.

Table 2.8
Number of Teachers According to Gender, Type of School and Locality

Type of School		Gender		Locality			
		M	F	Urban		Rural	
				M	F	M	F
Co-ed	N=1460 %=68.5	355 24.5	1095 75.5	88 12.4	621 87.6	267 36.0	474 64.0
Single Sex	N=350 %=16.4	188 53.7	162 46.3	188 53.7	162 46.3		
Technical	N=168 %=7.9	77 46.1	90 53.9	19 30.6	43 69.4	58 55.2	47 44.8
Agama	N=154 %=7.2	54 35.5	98 64.5	11 45.8	13 54.2	43 33.6	85 66.4
Total	N=2132	674 31.8	1445 68.2	306 26.7	839 73.3	368 37.8	606 62.2

N.B. 13 teachers did not indicate their gender, 4 in urban schools and 9 in rural schools.

In both urban and rural sectors, there were more female teachers in the co-ed and agama schools. There was however a slightly higher percentage of male teachers in the rural technical schools but the urban technical schools displayed the usual predominance of female teachers (Table 2.8).

Table 2.9 shows that the school subjects that the participating teachers taught spread over a wide range, with the highest percentage of them teaching Bahasa Melayu, a compulsory subject for all students. This percentage was followed by percentages of those teaching Mathematics, Science, English and History which are also compulsory subjects but are taught in fewer periods. The data therefore suggests that the representation of teachers, from the perspective of subjects taught, is good.

c) School Administrator Sample

In this study, principals, senior assistants (administration), senior assistants (students' affairs), senior assistants (co-curriculum) and afternoon supervisors are classified as school administrators. One hundred and forty-two (142) of them responded to the questionnaires and the number of respondents in each of the administrative positions is shown in Table 2.10. Only 23 of the principals returned

Table 2.9
Number of Teachers According to Subjects Taught

Subject Taught	Male Teachers		Female Teachers		Total No. Of Teachers	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Bahasa Melayu (Malay Language)	147	31.8	315	68.2	462	14.5
English (including Literature)	87	29.2	211	70.8	298	9.3
Mathematics /Additional Maths	114	32.5	237	67.5	351	11.0
Science (Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Integrated Science)	99	28.5	248	71.5	349	10.9
Geography	74	39.8	112	60.2	186	5.8
History	95	33.1	192	66.9	287	9.0
Physical/Health Education	104	44.6	129	55.4	233	7.3
Islamic Education	70	37.4	117	62.6	187	5.9
Moral Education	48	23.3	158	76.7	206	6.4
Basic Economics, Principles of Accountancy, Commerce	25	21.5	91	78.5	116	3.6
Vocational & Technical Subjects	96	49.2	99	50.8	195	6.1
Others	110	33.8	215	66.2	325	10.2
Total	1069		2124		3195*	100

* A teacher may teach more than 1 subject.

the questionnaire, implying that the response is poor as 40 schools participated in the study. However, some of them might be among the 22 who did not indicate their designation. The response from senior assistants in charge of administration and senior assistants in charge of students' affairs was good as 32 of them responded. But, the response of the senior assistants in charge of co-curriculum was poor as only 17 of them participated. Again, some of them might be among the 22 respondents who did not disclose their designation. As not all participating schools have afternoon sessions, it is difficult to assess their response rate of afternoon supervisors.

A number of the administrators expressed their reluctance to respond or indicate their designation because they felt there was no real anonymity despite not having to disclose their names. By stating their designation, they felt they were in reality identifying themselves. Table 2.11 shows that administrators in rural schools displayed a greater reluctance to identify themselves as 68.4% did not indicate their administrative status. However, more principals in the rural schools responded as 68.4% of them returned the questionnaire and identified themselves, compared to 47.6% of the principals in urban schools. The percentages of all the three categories of senior assistants in rural schools responding to the questionnaire were lower than their urban counterparts.

Table 2.10
School Administrator Participants According to Designation

<i>Designation</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Principal	23	16.2
Senior Assistant (Administration)	32	22.5
Senior Assistant (Students' Affairs)	32	22.5
Senior Assistant (Co-curriculum)	17	12.0
Afternoon Supervisor	16	11.3
Did not indicate designation	22	15.5
Total	142	100

Table 2.11
School Administrator Participants According to Designation and Locality

<i>Designation</i>	<i>Urban</i> N = 21		<i>Rural</i> N = 19	
	No. of Schools	%	No. of Schools	%
Principal	10	47.6	13	68.4
Senior Assistant (Administration)	17	80.1	15	78.9
Senior Assistant (Students' Affairs)	17	80.1	15	78.9
Senior Assistant (Co-curriculum)	10	47.6	7	36.8
Afternoon Supervisor	12	57.1	4	21.1
Did not indicate designation	9	42.9	13	68.4

When the responses of the administrators were analyzed according to gender, it was found that there were more male than female administrators; there were 53.5% male and 46.5% female administrators. This male:female ratio is contrary to the predominance of female teachers. For instance, while among the teacher respondents in the co-ed schools, there were 3 females to 1 male, there were 1.4 males to 1 female among the administrators. Single sex schools seemed to be an anomaly: although there were more male teacher respondents, there were more female administrators in the participating sample.

Table 2.12
Number of Male and Female School Administrators According to Gender and Urban-rural Locality

Type of School		Gender		Locality			
		M	F	Urban		Rural	
				M	F	M	F
Co-ed 26 schools	N=93 %=65.5	54 58.1	39 41.9	17 39.5	26 60.5	37 74.0	13 26.0
Single Sex 6 schools	N=26 %=18.3	9 34.6	17 65.4	9 34.6	17 65.4	0 0	0 0
Technical 4 schools	N=6 %= 4.2	3 50.0	3 50.0	1 33.3	2 66.7	2 66.7	1 33.3
Agama 4 schools	N=17 %=12.0	10 58.8	7 41.2	2 66.7	1 33.3	8 57.1	6 42.9
Total	N=142	76 53.5	66 46.5	29 38.7	46 61.3	47 70.1	20 29.9

Since 4 technical schools participated in the study there should be at least 14 administrators because each school has a minimum of 4 administrators (including the principal and three senior assistants but discounting the afternoon supervisor). Only 6 of them responded. This small number of respondents may be due to their administrative responsibilities which took them away from their schools during the data collection.

Procedure

After selecting the schools through random sampling based on established criteria, the research proposal and list of selected schools were sent to the Educational Planning and Research Division, Ministry of Education, Malaysia for approval. On procuring this, permission from the various State Departments of Education was sought before the schools were contacted for their consent and to provide

them with information such as the number of classes required and the amount of time needed for the students to respond to the questionnaire. They were also asked to state the most appropriate time for the research to be carried out in their school.

A lecturer in the research team was assigned to a zone and each of them was aided by at least one research assistant. The questionnaires were administered to the students in their classrooms, except for one school where the questionnaires were administered in the school hall.

There were greater variations in the way the questionnaires were given to the teachers. In some schools, all the teachers were assembled in the conference rooms to respond to the questionnaires. In others, they were given to the teachers as they came into the staff room for their free periods or break.

As for the administrators, the questionnaire was administered individually. A few administrators who were away returned their responses to SUHAKAM by post.

The period for data collection was scheduled for 7 April to 31 May 2003. However, owing to end-of-term examinations and unexpected holidays, the dates for data collection in a number of schools had to be rescheduled. Due to the commitments of the researchers and the schools' activities, such as sports' day, the data collection could not be completed until September.

Data Analysis

The Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the responses of the students, teachers and school administrators. For each of these samples (that is, students, teachers and administrators), the percentage of respondents who checked "yes", "true" or "agree" was computed according to type of schools, gender and locality (urban or rural). The percentage of those who did not respond to each of the items was also computed.

Not all the analyses of the data collected are reported in this document. Only data on rights and practices that pertain directly to students' wellbeing in school are included. Among the data that has been excluded is the teachers' response to the item concerning the format for human rights education.

Summary and Observations

Except for the rescheduling in a few schools, the researchers had no problem with the data collection. The principals, their senior assistants and teachers gave their full cooperation. The rescheduling was due to unforeseen circumstances

and none of them was an attempt to avoid taking part in the survey.

The students, even the Form II students, had no problems with the questionnaire. A few students had problem with the term, "*diskriminasi*" and the lecturers used terms such as "*menyebelahi*" and or "*pilih kasih*" to explain "*diskriminasi*". Some students approached the researchers or their assistants to relate the discrimination they had encountered or observed. A few teachers and students were interested to know more about the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) and human rights and proposed that SUHAKAM hold roadshows in their schools or communities.