

## **The Effect of Cultural Support and Classroom Activities towards Development of Students Skill: Comparison Between Malaysia and Indonesia**

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**Abstract:** This study was conducted to determine the influence of the school environment to support soft skills among secondary school students in Malaysia and Indonesia. This survey study which used questionnaire was conducted involving 400 students and 528 Malaysian students in Indonesia. Data were analyzed using SPSS 23.0 and Amos 18.0. A pilot study was conducted to determine the validity and reliability of the instrument and the results of the pilot study showed that variables of school environment support and student's soft skills have high reliability. The results showed that there were significant differences of environmental support and soft skills among students in Malaysia and Indonesia. Students in Malaysia have better support from school culture and classroom activities as compared to students in Indonesia. From the aspect of soft skills, it showed that Indonesian students have higher leadership, communication and cooperation skills than Malaysian students. While in term of thinking skill, interpersonal management and information technology there are similar performances of students from both countries. SEM analysis indicates that support from school culture and classroom activities have significant influence among students in Malaysia towards the development of their soft skills which in contrast with Indonesian students which only classroom activities impacted their soft skill's construction. The study provides implications for teachers to provide support on an ongoing basis in order to improve the student's soft skills with emphasis on classroom activities and the importance of Ministry which needs to provide more training and courses for teachers so that the application of soft skills among students will be successfully implemented either in Malaysia or Indonesia.

**Key words:** School culture support, classroom activities, soft skills, Malaysia, Indonesia, management

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Soft skill issue is not a new topic and oftenly talked about and discussed as well as disputed by some industrialized site whether locally or from abroad, towards graduate's soft skills from higher or lowel education institution. According to Noor and Sahimin (2010) as well as Abdullah (2007), many employers are now require workers who are not only equipped with technical skills but also with generic skills to ensure they have multiple skills in performing various tasks given in order to improve productivity and competitiveness. Thus, there are various studies, efforts and measures taken by the institutions in order to produce an individual which has awareness towards the importance of soft skills and also equipped with the skills to ensure the success in their future life. Extra-curricular activities either in school or in higher education institutions which comprises of

uniformed bodies activities, clubs and societies as well as sports activities are mostly conducted outside the classroom. This activity is part of the learning process. The importance of this activity is equivalent to the importance of activities in the classroom because of its role as a contributor and complement the effectiveness of teaching and learning. However, the emphasis on students to master all the elements of soft skills can be improved by applying soft skills in extra-curricular activities.

Malaysia is now heading towards the formation of a developed country to achieve its 2020 Vision. As we move towards the establishment of a developed country, there are many challenges and obstacles faces, among others is to establish a harmonious society, a stable economy and the use of sophisticated technology. To establish an advanced society the advanced technology which will increase the demand for quality technical works

experienced and has a range of general skills is high where it should be exposed through a comprehensive education and training. Therefore, the Ninth Malaysia Plan has outlined one aspect to raise the capacity for knowledge and innovation and nurture 'First Class Mentality' among Malaysians in line with the current technological era. To produce first class human capitals which are competitive, efficient, durable and flexible when faced with many challenges in the job then the emphasis of soft skills among students need to be enhanced (Anuar and Esa, 2010).

In Indonesia, the balance between attitudes, skills and knowledge to build soft skills is less observed in the education system development because priorities are given for knowledge contents. Indonesia in this globalization era is highly required to increase their competence in various fields and sectors of development, especially in the scope of education where graduates should be capable to compete with other nations. In fact, the practice of education system in Indonesia is still giving priorities towards the development of knowledge and skills ability even more orientated as compared to hard skills learning. This means that the students will not only be given academic expertise and technical competence but also equipped with the skills to solve problems related to mathematics. However, in reality of the learning that takes place at school, relating to Mathematics subject the teachers tend to resolve to finding quick solution for materials that being taught, regardless of student's creativity, hard working attitudes as well as giving less freedom for them to express their ideas and communicate with a group of friends in their quest to find the solution for their problem.

**Soft skills:** Soft skill comprises of generic skills aspects which involve cognitive elements related to non-academic skills such as leadership, teamwork, communication, positive value and continuous learning. Soft skills are identified as a highly critical element in the researching world which is globalized rapidly in line with advancement of technology. Ministry of Education (MOE) has outlined seven soft skills that need to be implemented by the institutions of higher learning (IPTA) to ensure that graduates have the competence, skills and the ability to compete in the global era, namely communication skills, critical thinking and solving skills problems, teamwork skills, learning and information management, entrepreneurial skills, ethics and professional values and leadership skills (Ministry of Education, 2006). Soft skill is an important element in meeting the human resources requirement which is competent for the global needs (Adnan, 2004) as well as necessary to meet the goals of

the national education philosophy which is to produce a balanced human capital in terms of physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual.

According to Safarin and Zolkifli (2005), the identified cause of school graduates to fail in leading themselves towards better life decision is the inability to master multiskill, completing challenging assignments, adapt to the environment and be confidence in their own capabilities. According to Kamsah (2004) not all students are weak in technical aspects or understanding of science, mathematics and physics but they are weak in the soft skills which can lead to the inefficient use of their mastery in technical aspects. Therefore, students need to prepare themselves to reduce the mismatch of skills in order to meet the requirement of the industry.

**School environment:** The school environment can be defined as a set of internal features that distinguish one school with another school and influence the behavior of members of staff and students (Hoy and Miskel, 1987). However, according to Fraser (1986) the school environment is much wider and is not confined to the classroom only through the relationship between students and students and students and teachers. Culture can be seen as a behavior, values, attitudes and way of life of an individual to make adjustments to the environment and also become a way of looking at things and solve problems. In short, culture can be defined as the overall concept of a system of ideas, actions and results of a person's research which includes the ability to think, social, technological, political, economic, moral and art. In addition, the school culture also refers to a system of values, beliefs and norms which are commonly accepted and implemented with full awareness as natural behavior is shaped by the environment (Hambali, 2014). According to Zamroni (2011) school culture is the soul and the strength of the school to grow and adapt to the environment.

**School culture:** School culture is the pattern of values, principles, traditions and habits that are formed in the long journey of school, developed at the school in the long term and becoming the principle of the whole school community in order to encourage the emergence of attitudes and behavior of school communities (Zamroni, 2011). This is because as a formal institution that focuses on education the school is capable in building the student's character through the knowledge and behavior. In addition the school culture is dynamic, property of the whole school community and is a product of the interaction of various levels. School culture is unique and will not be similar to another school.

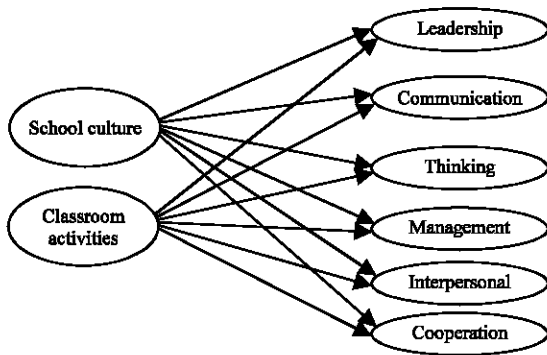


Fig. 1: Research conceptual framework

Establishment of school culture reflects the deep trust and confidence as well as a special aspect for school staff in developing student's character through the views, attitudes and behaviors that are developed in schools. School culture is passed down from generation to generation through the vision and mission, purpose, discipline and others which comprises of three aspects including academic, social and democracy culture.

**Classroom activity:** The classroom is a place for education as well as the site for human development. In the classroom, teachers play an important role in implementing the values for positive character formation through the expertise, competence and skills and use appropriate strategies and methods of teaching and learning (PDP). In fact, every student in a classroom has a difference in terms of personal qualities, interests and needs (Brophy, 2006). Through good interaction between teachers and students, the PDP process can take place effectively. This study was to identify whether teachers play a role in providing guidance in terms of interaction with classmates, giving analytical tasks and problems, promote teamwork, encourage students to think in a creative and associate learning with current issues. In addition the promotion of the use of ICT for researching additional resources in order to complete the given task need to be done to improve the management skills of information technology. Good communication and interaction between teachers and students as well as among peers is vital to be applied in the classroom learning (Fig. 1). Based on the literature review and the problem statement above, further research is conducted to determine the school environment support such as school culture and classroom activities as well as soft skills among students in Malaysia and Indonesia which comprises of leadership skills, communication, thinking, management, interpersonal and cooperation. Comparison

between students in Malaysia and Indonesia in the aspect of environmental support that mostly affect the student's soft skills in each country is identified.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

**Participants:** This study involved 400 students in Malaysia from 20 government high schools in Klang Valley, Kuala Lumpur and a total of 528 students from 20 Indonesian government high schools in Palembang. In Malaysia, a total of 190 students are (47.5%) men and 210 women (52.5%) girls. Next, based on the type of school shows a total of 200 (50.0%) respondents are from daily secondary school, a total of 100 students (25.0%) of religion-based secondary school and a total of 100 patients (25.0%) students are from technical and vocational schools. In Indonesia, a total of 218 (41.3%) men and 310 students (58.7%) are women. Next, based on the type of school shows a total of 206 students (39.0%) are from daily secondary school, 167 students (31.6%) from religion-based secondary school and a total of 155 students (29.4%) are from technical and vocational schools. The sample was selected randomly and the survey was conducted using a questionnaire with a likert scale of 5 points to obtain information about learning support and soft skills.

### Measure

**Environmental support:** Environmental support instruments built by researchers and has been reviewed by experts for validity. Validity means that accuracy and truth of a device for measuring a research instrument. Before the actual study was carried out the instrument must first go through a process to examine the validity of the instrument to determine its capability to measure the research subject (Pallant, 2007). The validity of the instrument in this study is based on questionnaires with likert 5 points (1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree) built by researchers and has been referred by two experts to verify the validity of the content, language and terminology used in the questionnaire. After the expert's approval the questionnaire is also improved based on their recommendations. There are 21 items to measure the environmental support, 9 items to measure the school's culture and 12 items to assess classroom activities.

**Soft skill:** Soft skills instruments have also been developed by researchers using 5 points likert scale (1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree). There are 50 items of soft skills in total, namely 9 items for leadership, 9 items for communication, 8 items for thinking, 6 items for management of technological transformation, 8 items for interpersonal and 10 items for cooperation.

A pilot study was conducted involving a total of 200 research samples from to determine the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmation Factor Analysis (CFA) as well as the Alpha value for each variable studied that support learning and soft skills. Confirmation factor analysis confirmed the role and seek the reliability of any measurement in most social science research. Criteria of conventional acceptance of Chi-square indicated by significant results. Relative Chi-squared (CMINDF) must be between 1 and 5 to achieve model conformity. TLI, CFI and GFI values should be in the range of 0-1. However, RMSEA should be under 0:08 to indicate an acceptable value for the data (Schumacker and Lomax, 2004). Awang (2012) stated RMSEA values between 0 and 1 can still be accepted. The reliability of an instrument refers to the consistency of a device to measure variables (Konting, 1990). The reliability for internal consistency of cronbach alpha is between 0.00-1.00. Items that have alpha value of at least 0.60 is oftenly used as the reliability index of an instrument while values <0.60 were considered to be low and not acceptable.

Factor analysis result indicated that the support which consists of two aspects namely school culture and classroom activities with the weighting between 0.61-0.82. Cronbach alpha values for aspects of school culture (0.78) and classroom activities (0.73) has a high cronbach alpha values. Overall the instrument used to measure the environmental support has an alpha value of 0.85 and the instruments can be used in the actual study. The results of factor analysis showed that the variables of soft skills which consist of 6 aspects of leadership, communication, thinking skills, information technology management and interpersonal and cooperating skills with the weighting factor between 0.60-0.79. The aspects of leadership (0.88), communication (0.94) thinking skill (0.92) the transformation of technology management skills (0.87), interpersonal (0.92) and cooperation (0.93) has a high Cronbach alpha values. Overall the instruments used to measure soft skills among students has an alpha value of 0.95 and the instruments are capable to be used in the actual study.

Test inference involved is Manova test and SEM (Structural Equation Model). Manova test was used to

determine the differences in the environmental support and human skills based on state. SEM test is used to determine the effect of school culture and classroom activities to the development of soft skills measured by student's leadership, communication, thinking skills, information technology, management skills, interpersonal and collaborative skills. To perform this analysis, Software the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 23.0 and AMOS 18.0 were used.

## RESULTS

**School environmental differences among Malaysian and Indonesian students:** MANOVA test was conducted to see a difference in the school environment support towards the students based on their country. Before MANOVA analysis conducted the researchers first conduct a test to determine homogeneity of variance-covariance matrix using Box's M test. Box's M test indicated that there is no significant difference of variance-covariance among the dependent variable for all level of independent variables with the Box's M = 114,143 and Sig. = 0.002 ( $p > 0.001$ ). This means that the variance-covariance dependent variable is homogenous across the independent variables. Therefore, MANOVA analysis can be performed to see the difference in the school environment support towards the students based on their country (Pallant, 2007). MANOVA analysis results can be seen in Table 1 and 2.

Table 1 shows that there is significant difference in the school environment support among students based on country with the Wilk's  $\Lambda = 0.904$ ,  $F(1,926) = 0.000$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). Difference support for every aspect of the classroom environment and school culture among students by country in more detail which has been analyzed using MANOVA can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2 shows significant differences in the environmental support on the aspect of school culture  $F = 74.012$  and Sig. = 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ) and classroom activities  $F = 67.044$  and Sig. = 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ) among students based on country with the value. In terms of the mean it was revealed that Malaysian students (mean = 3.89 and SP = 0.75) has the support from cultural

Table 1: Wilk's lambda on the differences of school environmental support among students based on country

Effect	Wilk's lambda value	F-value	df1	df2	Sig.
School environmental support	0.904	49.390	1	926	0.000

Table 2: Manova the differences of environmental support on the aspect of school culture and classroom among students based on country

School environmental support		Country	N	Mean	SD	Type 3 sum of squares	df	Sum of squares	F-values	Sig.
School culture		Malaysia	400	3.89	0.75	39.365	1	39.365	74.012	0.000
		Indonesia	528	3.47	0.71					
Classroom		Malaysia	400	4.04	0.55	20.451	1	20.451	67.044	0.000
		Indonesia	528	3.74	0.55	-	-	-	-	-

Table 3: Wilk's lambda the differences of soft skill among students based on country

Effect	Wilk's lambda value	F-values	df1	df2	Sig.
Soft skill	0.986	2.199	1	926	0.041

Table 4: MANOVA analysis on soft skill differences from the aspect of leadership, communication, thinking skill, management of technological information, interpersonal as well as cooperating skill among students based on country

Soft skill	Country	N	Mean	SD	Type 3 Sum of squares	df	Sum of squares	F-values	Sig.
Leadership	Malaysia	400	3.72	0.73	3.512	1	3.512	8.310	0.004
	Indonesia	528	3.85	0.58					
Communication	Malaysia	400	3.69	0.77	2.598	1	2.598	5.791	0.016
	Indonesia	528	3.80	0.58					
Thinking	Malaysia	400	3.84	0.65	0.999	1	0.999	2.483	0.115
	Indonesia	528	3.91	0.62					
Technological information management	Malaysia	400	4.03	0.69	0.489	1	0.489	1.168	0.280
	Indonesia	528	4.08	0.62					
Interpersonal	Malaysia	400	3.95	0.60	0.001	1	0.001	0.002	0.963
	Indonesia	528	3.95	0.57					
Cooperation	Malaysia	400	4.05	0.62	1.567	1	1.567	4.807	0.029
	Indonesia	528	4.13	0.53					

environment of the school which recorded higher value than the Indonesian students (mean = 3.47 and SP = 0.71). Similarly, in the aspect of classroom activities support, Malaysian students (mean = 4.04 and SP = 0.55) has higher classrooms support than the Indonesian students (mean = 3.74 and SP = 0.55).

**Differences of soft skills among students in Malaysia and Indonesia:** MANOVA test was also carried out to see the difference of soft skills among students based on country. Before MANOVA analysis was conducted the researchers first conduct a test to determine the homogeneity of the variance-covariance matrix using Box's M test. Box's M test indicated that there is no significant difference on the variance-covariance among the dependent variable for all level of independent variables with the Box's M = 371.237 and Sig. = 0.005 ( $p > 0.001$ ). This means that the variance-covariance dependent variable is homogenous across the independent variables. Therefore, MANOVA analysis can be performed to see the difference of soft skills among students by country (Pallant, 2007). MANOVA analysis results can be seen in Table 3 and 4.

Table 3 shows that there is a significant difference in students's oft skills based on the country with the Wilk's = 0.986,  $F(1,926) = 0.041$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). The difference to every aspect of the soft skills of leadership, communication, thinking skills, information technology management, interpersonal and collaboration skills among students by country in more detail in the analysis using MANOVA can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4 shows the significant difference of the soft skills on leadership aspects [ $F = 8.31$  and Sig. = 0.004 ( $p < 0.05$ )] communication [ $F = 5.791$  and Sig. = 0.016 ( $p < 0.05$ )] and research [ $F = 4.807$  and Sig. = 0.029 ( $p < 0.05$ )] among students based on county. In terms of the mean it shows that Indonesian students have higher leadership, communication and cooperation as compared

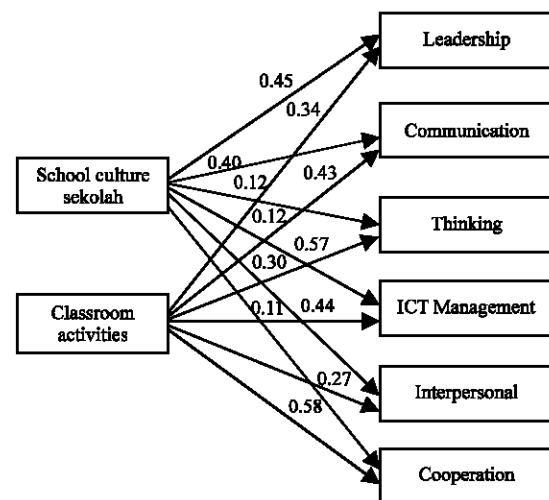


Fig. 2: The support from environment towards development of students soft skills in Malaysia

to Malaysian students. However, there were no significant differences in the soft skills of the aspects of thinking skills [ $F = 2.483$  and Sig. = 0.115 ( $p > 0.05$ )] the management of information technology [ $F = 1.168$  and Sig. = 0.280 ( $p > 0.05$ )] and interpersonal [ $F = 0.002$  and Sig. = 0.963 ( $p > 0.05$ )] among students based on country. In terms of the mean it indicates that Malaysian and Indonesian students have the similar thinking skills, management and information technology.

**The effect of environmental support to the soft skills development of Malaysian and Indonesian students:** Figure 2 shows the contribution of the support from school culture environment and classroom activities towards student's soft skills such as leadership, communication, thinking skills, information technology management skills, interpersonal and cooperation

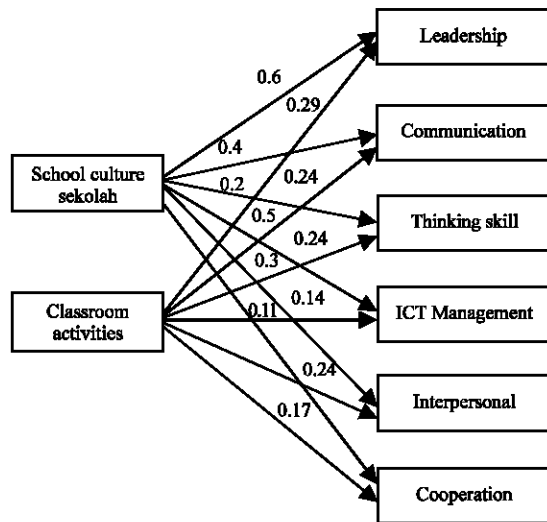


Fig. 3: The influence of environmental support towards Indonesian student's soft skill

skills. The analysis results of equation model SEM shows the  $\chi^2/df = 3.26$ , Root Mean Square Error Approximation (RMSEA) = 0.07, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = 0.94 and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 94. All types of assessment used to show that the data used in this study proved to have a reasonable adjustment for the proposed model. Results of the analysis of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) showed that the regression model is appropriate where the support from school culture ( $\beta = 0.45$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and classroom activities ( $\beta = 0.34$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) are significant variables toward leadership skills. Next, the support from school culture ( $\beta = 0.40$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and classroom activities ( $\beta = 0.43$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) is the significant variable for communication skills, school culture support ( $\beta = 0.12$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and classrooms activity ( $\beta = 0.57$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) is a significant variable for thinking skills. Classroom activities have a higher impact than school culture for the development of student's thinking skills. Furthermore, the school culture support ( $\beta = 0.12$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and classroom activities ( $\beta = 0.44$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) was a significant predictor variable of information and technology management skills. The results also showed that classroom activities have a higher impact than school culture of information technology management skills. School culture support ( $\beta = 0.30$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and classroom activities ( $\beta = 0.27$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) variables are significant predictors of interpersonal skills and the support from school culture ( $\beta = 0.11$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and classroom activity ( $\beta = 0.58$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) was a significant predictor variable to cooperation skills. The results also showed classroom activities have a higher impact than school culture towards collaboration skills.

Figure 3 shows the results of path analysis equation model SEM measurements  $\chi^2/df = 5.73$ , Root Mean Square

Error Approximation (RMSEA) = 0.07, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = 0.90 and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 0.91. All types of assessment conducted to show that the data used in this study proved to have a reasonable adjustment for the proposed model. Results of the analysis path model Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) showed that the suggested regression model is appropriate where the support of school culture is not a significant predictor of leadership skills, communication, thinking skills, management of information technology, interpersonal and collaborative skills ( $p > 0.05$ ). While classroom activities ( $\beta = 0.29$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) was a significant predictor variables of leadership skills. The study also shows that classroom activities ( $\beta = 0.24$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) was a significant predictor variables of communication skills, classroom activities ( $\beta = 0.24$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) was also a significant predictor of thinking skills variable. Classroom activities ( $\beta = 0.14$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) was also a significant predictor towards management skills in information technology, classroom activities ( $\beta = 0.24$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) is significant predictor of interpersonal skills and classroom activities ( $\beta = 0.17$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) is a significant predictor of research skills variable.

## DISCUSSION

The results showed that the environmental support of Malaysian students is higher than students in Indonesia. Students in many schools get support in terms of encouragement from cultural interaction and courtesy between students and teachers, encouragement and caring attitude towards research, counseling facilities and activities to create positive competition among students. In Indonesia, the education system also encourages students to interact and positive manners between students and teachers as well as conducting a variety of activities for students to create a positive competition. Next in terms of classroom activities, students in Malaysia are encouraged to cooperate within their group to improve their performance together, give assignments to students to find additional resources through the Internet, encourage students to be respectful of other's opinions as well as encourage the students to interact regardless of other's background and culture. In Indonesia, the students are more engaged with the task to find additional resources through the internet, encourage the students to be respectful of other's opinion and encourage students to interact with others regardless of their cultural background. Manova test also showed that students in Indonesia have higher soft skills in terms of leadership skills, communication and collaboration as compared to students in Malaysia. This is because the skills are widely applied among students in Indonesia. Students in Indonesia perform a task properly and encourage the team members to motivate themselves toward increased

performance. In line with the study conducted by Esa *et al.* (2014) which found that the leadership skills are applied among students and these skills can be mastered. Students in Indonesia also have better communication skills as compared with Malaysian students because students in Indonesia are capable in adjusting their communication skills with others to suit the situation like professionally presenting their research in front of the classroom. However, their English proficiency is still low. This report also supports the study findings by Dazali and Awang (2014) which stated that the students is capable to master communication skills, however their ability to speak in English is still at a low level. In addition, the collaboration skills among students in Indonesia are also better than Malaysia students where they can carry out a given task, appreciate and accept opinions in discussion groups, researching well to achieve the goal of group research, interact well with all members of the group and collaborate with team members who have different backgrounds. This indicates that the student is able to adjust the situation themselves and collaborate with others in completing an assignment.

SEM examination shows that there is influence from the school environment to support soft skills. Among Malaysian students it was reported that the school culture and classroom activities have a positive impact on their soft skill developemnt. On the other hand, only classroom activities affect student's soft skill in Indonesia. The results of this study showed that in both countries, aspects of classroom activities are highly affecting the student's soft skills. In line with the statement by Hasan *et al.* (2013) which stated that the school environment will aid the increment of student's involvement in extra-curricular activities. Through involvement in extra-curricular activities it will indirectly increase the soft skills among students as they will be exposed to the skills to communicate with teachers and colleagues, leadership skills, research skills and others.

As soft skill is vital in order to develop the character of students, learning strategies that can be developed is to optimize the interaction between teachers and students, students with students, teachers and students and generate a healthy environment and rich as well as enhancing various interactions. In addition, it should also provoke creativity in students to be actively involved, either physical, mental, social and emotional. Thus, when these skills were used by students they will be equipped with this skill when entering society as well as will be useful in their job prospect. Commitment of teachers to develop soft skills in learning is very important. This will be the influence as well as energy sources in creating the desired learning goals. The difficulties of teaching

students with many problems encountered during the process may waive the intention to develop soft skills. In addition the criteria for the successful achievement of these tend to still be based on student test scores achieved. Without a willingness to develop soft skills teachers will very likely re stuck on a study that just emphasising on exam scores. Without the techer's will the development of soft skills in learning can not be implemented. Good skills are highly required from teachers so that they can provide optimal learning as well as using their creativity in managing the class. Teachers need to have an understanding and ability to implement a variety of models, techniques, methods, approaches and learning strategies in order to conduct a better class. The teachers need to be equipped with a variety of learning methodologies to determine how far the development of their student's soft skills.

The school must create a culture that can implement and develop the student's soft skills. School culture should create a more innovative and competitive environment by organising various events and activities as well as encouraging the student's participation in activities to enhance their soft skills. Public speaking, quiz competitions, lectures and other activities need to be continuously conducted in order to improve soft skills among students. In addition, the school should alos strive to create a culture and environment that the school needs that can gain the student's interests so that their soft skills can be developed either directly and indirectly. Ministry of education in Malaysia and Indonesia need to make changes to the school curriculum by incorporating aspects of soft skills in the subjects taught in school. In addition the Ministry also need more training and courses for teachers so that the application of soft skills among students can be successfully implemented. Therefore, teachers need to be given constant exposure through in-service training in order to create a situation that is more effective in applying the soft skills to students and teach them on how to use their skills based on the teacher's knowledge through training and courses attended.

## CONCLUSION

**Closing:** Soft skill is very important to be cultivated in students in order to equip them with skills when they venture into job after completing school. This is because, the current workfield is concerned with soft skills such as leadership, communication, thinking skills, information technology management, interpersonal and cooperation. These skills are needed by employers in selecting their researchers which have the criteria of versatile and

multi-skilled to ensure the survival of a company or enterprise. This study proves that the support from environment is important for the both countries, Malaysia and Indonesia. Although, the influence of the environment from school support is different in Malaysia and Indonesia but the classroom activities is the most effective aspects towards the development of soft skills. Teachers are required to improve the classroom activities with various plans in order to improve the student's skills.

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