Forming National Unity among the National Service Program (MNSP) Participant through the Language and Literature Program (LLP)

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Abstract. The aim of this study is to examine whether the Language and Literature Program (LLP) is effective in fostering the understanding and national unity among the various ethnic groups of National Service Program (MNSP) participants in Malaysia through the national literature mechanism. There are characteristics of literature on the ethnic group’s relationship in the anthology of poems, My Motherland (2005), the mandatory text book for the participants. Quantitative method was applied by using a questionnaire to survey the acceptance of the MNSP participants toward the above anthology. Three National Service camps selected for this study represented three zones of Malaysia with 393 sample size. The Literary Unity Theory (Chew, 2007) was applied in this study and identified 13 unity indices in the anthology of poems, My Motherland (2005). Five social background characteristics of the respondents, consisted of ethnic type, gender, SES, domicile and the level of education, were analyzed regarding their relationship to the perception and the thinking of the MNSP participants. Findings showed that there were significant differences of opinions according to ethnic, SES and domicile, but no significant relationships for gender and levels of education. The impact of reading the anthology of poems, My Motherland (2005) among the MNSP participants was 21.3%. In conclusion, that MNSP was successful in building understanding among the different ethnic groups.

Keywords: The Language and Literature Program, Malaysian National Service Program, National Integration, National Literature, Literary Unity Theory

1. Introduction

The Malaysian National Service Program (MNSP) was introduced and started in 2004. It is aimed at forming a disciplined society, with true spirit, self confidence, faithfulness towards the nation, always prepared to face any trial and challenges, as well as to inculcate cooperation and fostering unity among all the ethnic groups in the country. MNSP is carried out in the Malaysian perspective to achieve the country’s need. Thus, four training modules which include the physical aspect, character building, nationalism and community service were designed[1].

2. The Language and Literature Program (LLP)

2.1. Statement of Problem

The Language and Literature Program (LLP) in MNSP aims at expanding the knowledge and understanding among the trainees on the importance of national language and literature (Malay Literature) for the purpose of building the spirit of goodwill among the main ethnic groups in Malaysia[2]. In this program, the anthology of poems, My Motherland (2005) was chosen as the compulsory text for the entire MNSP participants. It is hoped to foster cultural understanding and inculcate spirit of goodwill among the youths by learning national elements like country, nation and people, culture and religions from the anthology of poems, My Motherland. The anthology will be used as the main source for the presentation during the MNSP Literary and Cultural Night.

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