

# Dimensions of Teacher Effectiveness and Their Implications for Teacher Training Programmes in Malaysia.

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Salah satu tuduhan pada masa yang lalu ialah konsep keberkesanan guru yang dirangkakan oleh penyelidik dan pendidik tidak begitu jelas. Rencana ini telah cuba menghasilkan satu rangka pengkonsepkan untuk konsep keberkesanan guru. Ini adalah melalui beberapa dimensi yang menggambarkan sifat guru yang cekap dan berkesan.

Tumpuan telah diberi untuk mengaitkan dimensi keberkesanan guru dengan tujuan dan ciri program guru. Andaian yang terpenting ialah untuk melahirkan guru yang berkesan, maka program latihan guru melalui kurikulumnya seharusnya menitikberatkan penyuburan dimensi keberkesanan guru dengan lebih jitu dan ketara. Ini tidak sepatutlah secara sambilan tetapi adalah melalui strategi dan kurikulum yang lebih menepati dimensi keberkesanan guru secara langsung.

Sorotan yang utama kepada konsep keberkesanan guru adalah berasaskan hujah bahawa sebahagian besar kualiti pendidikan yang diingini dan diidamkan bergantung kepada sejauh mana guru yang sedang berkhidmat adalah cekap atau tidak. Masyarakat juga mahu guru yang efektif untuk perkembangan kanak-kanak ke arah pencapaian matlamat pendidikan yang menyeluruh. Oleh sebab-sebab tersebut, dimensi keberkesanan guru sewajarnya menjadi teras program latihan guru.

## Introduction

One of the important issues pertaining to teacher training programmes which has received renewed and heightened attention recently is related to the question of the real terms of the effectiveness of these programmes. This problem which has been focused on is recurrent. Some of the concerns which have drawn attention are related to the quality of training provided and the type of teachers produced who serve as measures of these training programmes. H.D. Gideonse (1982), D. Berliner (1984) and R. Tyler (1985) in writing about some of the weaknesses and desirable directions in teacher education have, for example, reminded us and brought to the fore these significant nexuses of concerns. Others like B. Honing (1985) have, additionally, sought to establish the desirability of striving for standards of excellence in teacher education, particularly in teacher training programmes. These complementary and supplementary issues in regard to questions of effectiveness and standards of excellence must lead us to take a more careful look at the design of and components in our teacher training programmes in Malaysia. This scrutiny is also opportune as teacher education in Malaysia is undergoing very fundamental adjustments. Some of the changes are seen in the introduction of the two and a half year programme, semester system, and re-orientation and introduction of the current teacher training courses to meet the far-reaching challenges posed by curricular reforms and innovations at the primary and secondary levels. This article basically addresses itself to some necessary inputs and foci with reference to the design of and professional elements in our teacher training programmes.

The overall strategy and logic that underpins the approach that is recommended is founded on the assumption that the design of the components in our teacher training programmes



must be related and tied more intimately and explicitly to the dimensions of teacher effectiveness. This is considered a more direct approach with connections which are more perceptible and easily grasped by teacher trainers and trainees. The dimensions of teacher effectiveness, especially in terms of desirable qualities, are usually more concrete and palpable for trainers and trainees who do not have a research orientation. These trainers and trainees are more often engaged in mundane issues entrenched in hard realities. They have to cope with a multitude of inadequacies of resources and other shortcomings in the school system and, more generally, the society at large.

### Variety of Inputs Needed

N.L. Gage (1972) in early attempts to establish teacher education on viable scientific and professional foundations, sought to relate research on teacher education and research on teacher effects. His professional stance is made clear in a flow chart which shows an order that begins from teacher education procedures to teacher behaviours and characteristics, and finally on to student learning. This approach hinges on what is revealed through research on teacher effects and their corollary, student learning. The basic assumption is that inputs from research on teacher effects and student learning must provide the important foci in teacher education. This reflects a research approach and emphasis in the determination of the components and desirable direction in teacher education. Whilst this research approach and perspective is essential and crucial for the long term upgrading of teacher education, we must not assume an overly naive position which may support the claim that we must only use existing research findings or even await further research confirmation of important pedagogical principles, for the complete planning of teacher training programmes. In our zeal for research on teacher education, teacher effects and student learning, we may fall into the extreme trap of **pretending** we do not know enough about desirable teacher behaviour qualities and their possible effects. We may even **pretend** to be cautious about principles which have been proven by experience and accepted by seasoned practitioners. Following from this, we may want to suggest further research to establish or verify those practices and principles. Whilst this commitment to research is truly commendable, and whilst we must admit that research can still reveal much in teacher education, teacher effects and student learning, we plead for some balanced restraint in going overboard for research because much efforts may be invested in confirming the obvious or even the trivial. Very often too, the many conditions, constraints and caveats in the findings may severely limit their usefulness in programme planning. They are in many cases too patchy and unable to provide the comprehensive and authoritative solutions that we seek from research. In short, in programme planning we are persuaded to use other inputs besides relying on established research findings. The time factor governing and constraining our search for urgent solutions may compel us to move away from merely relying on research efforts to reliance on these other inputs.

For a proper perspective, it must be pointed out that very significant and useful research on teacher education, teacher effects and student learning has been carried out. N.L. Gage (1984), B.O. Smith (1985) and many other scholars have drawn attention to and highlighted some of the important findings. However, the inescapable impression is that we are still far short of a comprehensive and integrated picture from these research findings. For the purpose of programme planning, we need a more complete and integrated view of teacher education, teacher effects, student learning or, more specifically, teacher effectiveness.

However, apart from this lack of a complete and integrated view of teacher education, we are also faced by daunting challenges in translating what we have won and obtained through good research into actual training strategies in teacher education programmes. The crucial issue in this exercise of translating the known into practice is located in the significance of the impact on trainees.

B.O. Smith (1985) in writing about the research bases for teacher education has drawn focus to some of the more significant findings advanced through good research. He stresses



that we need to use them more effectively. R.W. Tyler (1985) developed a similar line of argument when he explains that we have not learned or applied what we have learned from past studies of teacher education. These two recent expositions by B.O. Smith and R.W. Tyler suggest that there is still a big gap between what we already know through research and experience, and what we have been able to put into practice effectively. Consequently, efforts must be invested and addressed to the issues of this neglected and often, ignored gap. We most certainly need to optimise in terms of usage and application of what we already know. In our attempts to close this gap, it should be reiterated that the strategies and remedies we formulate must finally make **good sense** to administrators, practising trainers and their trainees. Only then can we hope to close this existing gap in concrete terms as seen in effective practice in our training programmes. Unless we achieve this necessary level of making good sense to administrators, trainers and trainees, this closing of the gap may only exist at the paper level and not at the implementational level. This appears to be a necessary pre-requisite condition for effective commitment to innovation and change in the fluid field of education, especially amongst administrators, trainers and trainees.

### **Past Inadequacies in the Conceptualization of Teacher Effectiveness**

In our efforts to draw attention to the necessity of emphasis on the dimensions of teacher effectiveness in teacher training programmes, it would be prudent to begin with past attempts to conceptualize teacher effectiveness. M.J. Dunkin and B.J. Biddle (1974) characterized past efforts in conceptualizing teacher effectiveness as inadequate. They cited four shortcomings as glaring. The first pertains to the failure to found concepts of teacher effectiveness on sound empirical data. They pointed out that researchers in this field failed to give sufficient importance to observation of actual teaching activities.

This appears to be a fundamental weakness which reflected a lack of commitment to evolve and check our conceptions of teacher effectiveness empirically. The second criticism is directed at what they term as theoretical impoverishment. The ideas which were spawned or often just dug up from the past were rather discrete and molecular. There were clearly insufficient and ineffective attempts to interrelate and integrate them with a more encompassing conceptual framework. The third accusation is serious in that they claim there was fuzziness in identifying the criteria of teacher effectiveness. This is a very basic weakness which mirrors inadequate scrutiny and analysis of the very criteria which form the linchpins of teacher effectiveness. The criteria that were suggested lacked objectivity and validity. They were more like criteria of convenience and were often of dubious value. Most of all, the criteria proposed lacked conceptual coherence. The fourth drawback has its source in the lack of concern for the wider effects and constraints of contextual factors in teaching-learning situations. This is frequently seen in attempts to overcircumscribe the range of variables in studies of teacher effectiveness. Important variables are sometimes excluded with the effect that the seemingly precise conclusions arrived at lacked generality and realism. Intervening, moderator or interactive effects are ignored for the purpose of simplification or experimental rigour associated with good control. Unfortunately, the findings that issue from these studies with overrestrictive contextual boundaries are frequently of very limited practical value for practitioners in the field. These practitioners have to cope with a reality that is both more demanding and bewildering in complexity. Consequently, simplistic findings with scant attention to the complexities of contextual effects, do not capture and hold the commitment of practising educators.

In a similar strain, many other research workers like A.S. Barr (1948) and N.L. Gage (1978) have criticised research work which gave prominence to teacher qualities. The proliferation of studies on teacher qualities added up to a plethora of piecemeal findings which were not bound together by unifying conceptual themes. Theories of teaching and learning were hard to come by, based on such disparate findings. Again at best, they merely gave academic credence to what many seasoned practitioners have accepted and known for a long



time. It is, therefore, not surprising that such studies on teacher qualities did not cause educators to sit up and take notice. Their impact on practice and innovations in training programmes was imperceptible. Many were inconsequential and merely gave rise to new terminologies for old existing concepts.

Several active research scholars attempted to correct these defects in studies of teacher effectiveness. M.J. Dunkin and B.J. Biddle (1974) for example proposed a conceptual model which stressed the relationships between presage, context, process and product variables in the study of teaching. This model attempted an integration of important concepts in teaching-learning. More importantly, it hoped to provide the theoretical framework where more empirical studies can be generated. These empirical studies which were encouraged were more oriented to the investigation of actual classroom activities and interactions.

N.L. Gage (1978, 1984) has also worked towards enhancing the academic and scientific respectability of this field of study. He chose to do it through an emphasis on the scientific basis of investigations in the field of teaching and its effects on student achievement and adjustment. He, however, tempers this thrust by exercising modesty, as he claims. In his cautious excursion towards a new focus, he advises emphasis on the establishment of relationships between variables. Implied is the desirability of being able to make stable predictions based on these scientific relationships between variables. Whilst he has taken great pains to push these ideas repeatedly at the academic citadels of Oxford and Harvard, his case even in his own words, is overmodest. Many may label this recommendation as a revisitation of correlational research. If not properly handled, research in this field could backslide into weak correlational studies. The merit in his endeavour is, nevertheless, in the fact that he has attempted to elevate research studies in teaching and learning by enunciating their scientific bases. He illustrated this with some well chosen studies which shows the scientific relationships between teaching conditions, teacher behaviours, and their effects in terms of pupil learning. These examples also exemplify the empirical foundations of the scientific basis that he has so vigorously promoted.

There has been many attempts to record the advances in the field of research in teacher effectiveness (Dunkin and Biddle, 1974; Bennett and McNamara, 1979; Phi Delta Kappan, Oct. 1984). Despite the significant advances in this field, one is still left with doubts about the comprehensiveness and integration of the findings. The inescapable feeling even now is that research efforts and the resultant findings are rather patchy and lacking in coherence through integration. When we refer to the comprehensive summary found in M.J. Dunkin and B.J. Biddle's (1974) Part III where they attempted at "Putting it all together", we still only obtain a partial and limited overview of the total picture and profile of teacher effectiveness. We need more than is given for effective use in the formulation of training programmes geared to issues of teacher effectiveness.

The research literature is also characterized with findings which end up with generalized conclusions. These are almost axiomatic. N. Haigh and B. Katterns (1984)-in writing about teacher effectiveness, for example, offer six conclusions to summarize what they consider as the most significant principles. All of the six conclusions are very broad generalizations resembling aphorisms. The first conclusion, for example, postulates that effective teachers "understand the conditions that help or hinder learning, and make sensitive use of this knowledge in their planning, teaching and evaluation activities" (p.24). The remaining five conclusions are equally general almost to the extent of being self-evident truths. They illustrate the point that planners of and trainers in teacher training programmes have very little to work with if they rely on these high level and abstract conclusions. N. Haigh and B. Katterns proffer the excuse that the conclusions must remain generalized principles as "At the present time research neither supports a comprehensive theory of teaching, nor does it provide a set of generally accepted criteria for judging teaching competence" (p.23). The recency of this opinion published in the *Journal of Teacher Education* (Sept. - Oct., 1984) gives the flavour of significant opinions amongst many researchers and teacher educators.



### Some Trends in the Identification of Dimensions of Teacher Effectiveness

D.M. Medley (1979) detected and traced five significant trends in studies of teacher effectiveness. These trends can also be seen as approaches to the identification of the dimensions of teacher effectiveness. The first trend emphasized the personality traits of the teacher. Teacher effectiveness is considered largely the expression of these personality traits. The second trend focused on methods of teaching employed by the teacher. The effective mastery and skilful use of a repertoire of teaching methods are considered as decisive in determining how effective a teacher would be. The third trend stressed the characteristics of the teaching-learning climate brought about by the teacher. The effective teacher is measured by his ability to create, manage and facilitate an ambience of teaching-learning conditions which is conducive to pupil growth and development. The fourth trend is seen in the focus on teaching competencies. The effective teacher must possess and master a range of needed competencies spanning a variety of skills in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. The fifth trend identified pertains to decision-making skills in teaching. The crux of good teaching hinges on appropriate and effective decision-making. The teacher is always confronted with a variety of challenges; each posing alternatives which require creative or mechanical, easy or difficult choices. The measure of effectiveness in this approach is located in the quality of the choices made and the effects attendant. The good teacher is associated with good decision-making in the context of often very fluid teaching-learning situations.

In the last decade of research and programme development in teaching and training, we have witnessed a strong and continuing emphasis on teacher competencies. Articles focusing on teacher competencies are recurrent in influential publications (Smith and Nagel, 1979; Freyberg, 1980; Bundy, 1981; Kyriacou and Newson, 1982; Fordham, 1982; Kyriacou, 1983). Even the Educational Testing Service, Princeton (Bendersen, 1982) has an active programme highlighting issues of teacher competencies. Recent revisions of the National Teacher Examination (NTE) have also given prominence to teacher competencies in the areas of, for example, communication skills. The future may see a stronger surge of interest in this aspect of teacher effectiveness, as returns are promising.

The affective aspects of teacher effectiveness have also attracted exploratory work. These affective aspects are important and, even, pivotal in many circumstances. They are related to issues of teacher dedication, effort, striving and stamina. An interesting example is the research work on teacher enthusiasm as a significant factor in teacher effectiveness. Attempts to measure teacher enthusiasm, and correlate and trace its relationships with pupil development, in particular, pupil learning deserve more attention (Gephart et al., 1981). Such efforts are indicative of the belief that we must give due and increasing regard to the underlying source of driving force or energy in teacher effectiveness.

Some early attempts to set down the criteria of teacher effectiveness deserve re-examination and further development. An example is the hierarchy of criteria according to standards of ultimacy, formulated by the American Educational Research Association in 1952. There are some signs that such a classification of criteria of teacher effectiveness, may be refocused and developed further in the future. AERA's emphasis on a hierarchical ordering of the criteria from teachers' intelligence to teachers' knowledge of methods of curriculum construction; and proceeding to the highest and ultimate criterion of the teachers' effects on the pupils, is a useful way of looking at the continuum of criteria for teacher effectiveness. Though it is commendable, it deserves more refinement and development to make it more relevant and useable for programme planning in teacher training. Similarly, M.E. Mitzel's (1957) early conceptualization of a generalized scheme for research in teacher effectiveness, could still provide a solid base for further conceptualization and refined elaboration. His focus on teacher variables, contingency factors, classroom behaviours and changes in pupil behaviours is still pertinent, and can serve as a useful launching base for more in-



depth formulation in regard to attempts to early teacher effectiveness. The purpose of citing the AERA and Mitzel's examples is to bring to mind valuable materials and ideas from the past. There are perceptible signs in the recent in the field of teacher effectiveness may be developed and used by more researchers and programme planners.

Research addressed to issues of teacher effectiveness has drawn different reactions. They range from expressions of despair to statements that we have made significant strides (Dunkin and Biddle, 1974; Gage, 1984; Tyler, 1985). Recently, we have witnessed renewed calls to redouble our efforts to establish its scientific status through research characterized by rigour. Such attempts to elevate research in teacher effectiveness and steer clear of trivialities have also been accompanied by pleas that it should be significant and must lead to fruitful applications. The trend embodied in this research for sound practice (Gage, 1984) will most likely result in more efforts directed at the significant dimensions of teacher effectiveness which will make a difference in real practice. Emphasis on realistic and practical teacher competencies is an example of this trend. We may see more studies not only aimed at the establishment of relationships between variables and the resultant predictions that are made possible, but also studies seeking to clarify the tight functional or even casual relationships between dimensions of teacher effectiveness and pupil development, especially in terms of learning. Only then can research in teacher effectiveness be more convincing beyond the level possible through just more relationships between variables. This appears to be a difficult and yet stimulating challenge that research in teacher effectiveness must grapple and come to terms with, if it is to reach the level of elevation sought for its scientific status.

## **Dimensions for a Profile of Teacher Effectiveness**

### **Wholistic Context**

Teacher effectiveness has its roots in the teacher's commitment to the goals and objectives of education as desired by society. The achievement of these goals and objectives are associated with the performance of appropriate roles and assumption of specified obligations by the teacher. The ultimate measure of the meeting of these goals and obligations is operationalized through the actual or perceived effects the teacher has on his pupils, as seen in their growth and development. Another significant concomitant aspect is the teacher's effect on the teaching-learning environment. The extent to which he enhances the quality of the teaching-learning environment must also serve as an important albeit less ultimate indicator of his effectiveness. Though this is in some ways secondary, it is vital as the teaching-learning environment provides the very medium where the pupil thrives, learns and develops. It is in this wholistic context that we associate teacher effectiveness with concepts of the teacher as a:

- (a) agent or catalyst in the pupil's growth and development;
- (b) facilitator in pupil learning;
- (c) stimulator of pupil efforts;
- (d) guide and model;
- (e) manager and arranger of optimal and conducive teaching-learning conditions and experiences; and
- (f) decision-maker in maximizing opportunities for the well-being of the pupils.

Teacher effectiveness must also be embedded in the teacher's characteristics and on-going development. These encompass all aspects of his life both professional and non-professional. Our conception of this aspect of his effectiveness must by necessity be broad and pervasive, insofar as they impinge on his ability and motivation to actualize his roles and obligations. Consequently, the teacher's professional and extra professional development and well-being must remain as part of our foci in our search for the dimensions of teacher effectiveness. They belong to his dynamic adaptive ability that enables him to function and adjust within the constraints of the societal and school environment. They are admittedly secondary, but they cannot be ignored because they are casually related to the ultimate criterion of teacher affects on pupil development.

## **Pertinent Dimensions of Teacher Effectiveness**

### **(A) Personality Dimension**

The teacher's personality could have a bearing on his effectiveness in multifarious ways. Though the influence and effects of the teacher's personality are pervasive, there are three aspects which need to be stressed, namely:

- (i) the investment of effort, commitment and dedication of the teacher in the course of fulfilling his role and obligations;
- (ii) the nature and quality of the teacher's relationship and interaction with his pupils and others who could affect the way he performs his role and obligations; and
- (iii) the modelling effect of the teacher through his personality characteristics. His attitudes, values, love for children, altruism, enthusiasm and many other traits are conscious and unconscious factors in the lives of the pupils. The total impact of his effectiveness must in important aspects be captured and embodied in indicators that tell how these qualities transform positively or negatively the lives of his pupils.

The personality dimension is often neglected because of the difficulty of measuring it or its effects. Objective measures are hard to obtain. Training programmes often give prominence to its importance in the preamble or in the statement of objectives. However, the majority of training programmes are not able to translate its importance into palpable terms in the actual training programmes. As a result of the many almost insuperable problems of tackling this problem directly, most training programmes rely on indirect means and high inference measures. Strategies for the development of this aspect are usually at best weak and largely indirect and incidental. There is a definite case for more emphasis as it relates to issues of teacher effectiveness in teacher training programmes.

### **(B) Teacher Competencies in the Content of School Subjects**

In Malaysia, a major and commonly used indicator of a teacher's effectiveness relates to the extent his students have performed successfully in the various school and public examinations. This indicator reflects the pupils' absorption, understanding and mastery of the content in terms of facts, concepts and principles. As a consequence of this preoccupation, a significant factor that is aligned to the importance attached to the pupil's mastery of content is the teacher's competencies in the content field he is teaching. For example, the teacher must show a sufficient level of mastery of the facts, concepts and principles he is imparting. His command of the subject matter is mirrored in his teaching. Unfortunately, some teachers are unable to reach the desired levels of effectiveness because of weaknesses and deficiencies in important areas of their knowledge.



The limited understanding or imperfect mastery of the teacher is in turn passed on to the pupils. The teacher's effectiveness in this instance and context has been affected by his inadequate command of the facts, concepts and principles in the particular content field.

The logical remedy to this weakness is to strengthen that component in the training programme that deals with the subject syllabuses the trainee has to handle. The trainee has to be familiar with the content, and then also masters it to a higher level. This higher level or indepth level should contribute to his education and confidence. It would also be reflected in his deeper understanding of the target subject matter. This is important as the problems and challenges in teaching pupils who are vastly different may require him to make constant adjustments with many variations to suit the range of individual differences. This is largely possible if he is thoroughly comfortable with the subject matter through mastery of it.

The problem is more serious in one-year professional courses for graduates. Many of the graduates have only done a few highly specialized or abstruse courses in the target content area. Consequently, their command of the subject matter still leaves much to be desired. In these one-year professional courses, there is often not enough time to strengthen their command of the relevant content areas. The accusation often levelled at these trainees is that they may know more about teaching than what they are supposed to teach.

In the training programmes that stretch over two and a half or three years, the problem may be attended to over a longer period of time. The danger in the usually limited time available is to expose trainees to too many content courses not directly related to the target content topics. This may contribute to the trainee's general education but may still not correct the specific content deficiencies of the trainees as they relate to the school syllabuses. The desirable solution is, therefore, to integrate more closely the content courses for the trainees with their content tasks in the schools. The major assumption is that the teacher's effectiveness must rest, to a large extent, on his command of the subject matter. This is unavoidable as it is related to important aspects of his role and obligations, in especially the Malaysian context.

### **(C) Teacher's Equipment: Competencies in Professional Aspects**

The professional competencies in the teacher's repertoire are defined in this paper to cover the skills which are related to the full range of his role and obligations. These exclude his command of the content subject matter dealt with in Section B. A teacher may not at any given moment use or exhibit all the skills that he possesses. His general effectiveness or potential effectiveness should, however, comprise his total professional equipment and his ability to call on them for use in a variety of possible situations. They include, for example, knowledge and ability in, namely:

- (i) the different methods of teaching;
- (ii) the various pedagogical competencies, like explanatory skills, reinforcement strategies and management of discipline;
- (iii) the principles of assessment and the effective use of the information obtained;
- (iv) the strategies available to cope with problems and challenges in and out of the classroom;
- (v) the principles in planning, managing, organizing and utilizing resources (pupils, equipment, books, etc.);



- (vi) the principles involved in promoting and facilitating optimal pupil growth and development;
- (vii) the medium of instruction; and
- (viii) a variety of other skills germane to the attainment of the stated goals and objectives of education.

The professional aspects could be measured by paper-pencil tasks, performance in simulated situations or performance in an actual teaching-learning environment. The main purpose of focusing on this issue of the teacher's pedagogical equipment is to establish the case that his repertoire of professional competencies is relevant to his effectiveness, in actual and potential problems and challenges. This, in turn, argues that every trainee should be equipped with a sufficient range and command of professional skills. The teacher who is thus equipped is more likely to be flexible, versatile and responsive to the complexity of needs and challenges posed by different situations and pupils. It is in this responsiveness and flexibility made possible by the possession of a variety of skills that teacher effectiveness resides.

#### (D) Quality of Implementation

It is often very difficult to capture and measure the whole gamut of effects of a teacher. Some of the effects are latent, delayed or not easily encapsulated by available indicators.

Consequently, we have to rely on process factors for indications of effectiveness. An example is the use of measures of the teacher's performance during implementation, or behaviours in other formal and informal situations. These performance measures require different degree of inference in regard to the actual effects on the pupils. If effectiveness is to be defined in terms of the **highest** ultimacy of effects on the pupils in the direction of the goals and objectives delineated, then these teacher performance measures are **lower** down the scale in terms of ultimacy of effects on the pupils. They require a short leap of inference from effective teacher behaviours to effective pupil learning. However, from the point of view of face validity, these teacher performance measures are attractive and belong more directly to concepts of teacher responsibility in fulfilling his assigned role and obligations. They are situated in the domain of what the teacher is trying to accomplish.

In the Malaysian context, such teacher performance measures are more viable, measurable, available and objective. In large and crowded classes where the pupils are generally passive, it may be difficult to obtain measures of learning and developmental changes for all the pupils. Even if measures are taken at the process or formative stage, they are at best limited to only a few of the sampled pupils. It also bears reiteration that short paper and pencil tests can also only capture limited aspects of the effects of the teacher on the pupils. The public examinations also leave much to be desired in summarizing the total teacher effects with regard to even pupil learning. Under these constraints, the judicious use of teacher performance indicators is probably the next best course of action. The lesson for training programmes is pay more attention to performance skills at the implementation stage.

Some of the important aspects of teacher effectiveness in implementation are, namely:

- (i) the quality of instruction;



- (ii) the nature of the interaction and relationship between teachers and pupils, or between pupils and pupils as facilitated by the teacher;
- (iii) the enthusiasm and dedication of the teacher, the particular, his persistence and sustained efforts in the face of challenges. This is with the purpose of meeting the needs of the pupils. It also includes his willingness and commitment to practise his ideals in teaching under difficult circumstances;
- (iv) the maximal and optional use of available resources, like time, equipment, etc.;
- (v) the quality of the organization and management of the teaching-learning environment; and
- (vi) the teacher's flexibility, creativity and resourcefulness in situations with severe constraints.

#### **(E) Pupil Learning and Development**

Teacher effectiveness finds its ultimate meaning in terms of pupils learning and development. The learning and developmental changes, of course, must be in consonance with the declared objectives and goals of education. This concept of effectiveness as associated with the nature of the teacher's effects on the pupils, should not be confined narrowly to book learning or examinations, but must perforce encompass the totality of teacher effects, we may have opened the Pandora's chest and taken on very daunting measurement problems. This is, nevertheless, unavoidable if we insist on exploring and mapping all the variagated domain within the maximal boundaries of teacher effects.

Besides focusing on pupil learning and development in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains, it is also desirable to define teacher effectiveness in terms of pupil effort and interest promoted. The pupil effort and interest generated should be seen from the view of their intensity and range. They may in some ways be considered as transcending measures of teacher effects, because they have a strong directive bearing on future activities and achievements. In another way, they may be considered as formative effects which could be finally projected into the future. This can be contrasted with the summative effects embodied in examination or test results.

#### **(F) Teaching and Learning Environment**

Lower down in the scale of ultimacy of teacher effects is the teacher's impact on the teaching-learning environment. The teacher's contribution to the teaching-learning environment is to different degree relevant to his desired effects on pupil learning and development. It must be admitted, however, that we require an inferential link between the teaching-learning environment and the ultimate effects in terms of pupil learning and development. Apart from the issue of the strength and nature of this link, there is also the desirability of focussing on this factor for its own intrinsic value. We want to have a stimulating, edifying and salubrious teaching-learning environment for its own sake because it is the very medium in which the pupils live in for a significant part of their lives. It is a major component in the quality of life in the school. The teacher's apportioned role and obligations cannot be divorced from his responsibility in the creation of a desirable teaching-learning environment. The teacher's effectiveness, therefore, is reflected in important ways in his contributions to the quality of the teaching-learning environment. This is a broader conception of teacher effectiveness taking into account the expectations of the society at large with reference to the teacher's role and obligations.



### (G) Continuing Professional Development

The concept and reality of teacher effectiveness must also have a futuristic component. The nature and quality of the teacher's continuing professional development and outlook are, admittedly, contributory and facilitatory factors to the ultimate criterion of pupil learning and development. Taking a wider view of relationships, a teacher's professional well-being is inseparable from issues of his desired effectiveness. Skills and values that the teacher possesses which are relevant to his on-going professional development are related to the other competencies which are more directly pertinent to the ultimate measures of effectiveness. These skills and values belong to the general professional maturity and motivation of the teacher. It is fairly apparent that these will affect very fundamentally the professional conduct and performance of the teacher, and eventually be decisive in determining the nature of his impact.

Some significant examples are, namely:

- (i) skills in making on-going self-evaluation for professional self-development;
- (ii) investment of efforts and initiative in up-grading one's professional knowledge and skills;
- (iii) commitment to trying out new ideas and practices to increase the repertoire of his professional equipment;
- (iv) professional vision, especially in terms of the enhancement and fulfillment of his role and obligations in a variety of creative ways; and
- (v) continuously developing and learning new ways at being resourceful. This also includes acquiring more effective and creative problem-solving abilities. Finally, there must be the growing attitude of wanting to benefit from experience; and build progressively and constructively on each successive experience, be it positive or negative.

### Some Important Issues

In giving focus to the dimensions of teacher effectiveness in teacher training programmes, and in formulating strategies to develop the trainees along these dimensions, we need to be concerned and constantly vigilant with reference to issues of transfer of training. The knowledge, skills and values nurtured must be transferable from the training ground to the places where they will serve in their professional careers. They should be the acid test of the robustness and effectiveness of the training programmes. If the trainee is only considered effective while undergoing training but, however, proves in reality to be far less effective in the final place of work, then serious questions must be raised concerning the validity and effectiveness of the whole training programme. This issue is just as relevant and cogent even granting the fact that many other factors may intervene to interfere with optimal transfer of training. The realization of the influences of these possible intervening factors argues that we may have to pay more attention in the training programme to inoculate the trainees to these interfering and disruptive influences. Even if we do not succeed immediately, we are beholden to take steps to sensitize them lest they are overtaken by unnecessary surprises or painful disillusionment. Hence, pre-emptive steps are necessary in the training programme to equip the trainees, as best possible, to problems which may interfere with maximal transfer of training.

After identifying the dimensions of teacher effectiveness, we are still left with the question of what holds them together. What is the cementing agent ensuring a high degree of in-



tegrity amongst the different dimensions, taken as a whole? The answer may lie in any one of the following or a combination of the following:

- (i) the teacher's values, attitudes and motivation;
- (ii) personality factors;
- (iii) aspirational factors;
- (iv) existence of sufficiently strong models;
- (v) reinforcement factors, either vicarious or direct;
- (vi) facilitating factors in the environment;
- (vii) career factors;
- (viii) the teacher's dedication and commitment to the teaching profession, and the satisfaction derived, or the continuing professional successes enjoyed; and
- (ix) a deep love for children, and an altruism that is seen in caring for them and wanting them to actualize their full potentialities.

One also needs to inject a large dose of realism into this discussion by observing that teacher effectiveness, even after training, must be cultivated and nurtured with care. The decision-makers, planners and administrators must arrange for appropriate and encouraging conditions to foster development along the dimensions identified. The obverse of this is the existence of such an unfavourable milieu that can eventually suffocate or stunt the growth of teacher effectiveness. Unfortunately, examples abound with reference to teachers regressing, declining or standing still in their effectiveness. The professional fatalities in teacher burnout (Bundy, 1981) are extreme examples. Less spectacular examples are teachers mechanically going through the motion of performing their roles and obligations with no enthusiasm at all.

### **Training Curriculum, Teacher Effectiveness and Evaluation in Training Programmes.**

The fostering of skills, values and knowledge in accordance with the demands of teacher effectiveness, must be woven into a deliberate strategy of evaluation in the curriculum which gives it prominence. The development of the desirable dimensions of teacher effectiveness must occupy a place which carries sufficient weight in evaluation to cause trainees to give importance to it. If these dimensions become actual goals instead of merely idealized goals, then trainers and trainees will respond in a commensurate manner in terms of giving it the priority it deserves. There is, therefore, a need to incorporate the dimensions of teacher effectiveness as effective goals in teacher training programmes. More importantly, we have to strive for a close and integrated match between defined goals and what actually constitutes the implemented programme. In many training programmes, there exists varying degrees of this mismatch. Many trainers would most willingly subscribe to the more idealized goals, as identified in the dimensions of teacher effectiveness. However, the critical problem is in the actual training curriculum. This actual training curriculum is often distorted because of different emphases given in the formative and summative evaluations. Other factors that may contribute to this distortion are:

- (i) lecturer or trainer inexperience, resulting in an inappropriate and ineffective curriculum;



- (ii) over-emphasis on general education, book knowledge and, sometimes, fanciful educational jargon;
- (iii) insufficient opportunities to practice with frequent and close supervision. Use of feedback from trainers by trainees, appropriate follow-up and tight monitoring of trainee progress, frequently leave much to be desired; and
- (iv) the gap between theory and practice in the training curriculum. Most would decry this gap, but we need good models and superb trainers to translate successfully and effectively theory into practice. The current disjointedness between theory and practice does not work towards an integrated training strategy for teacher effectiveness.

## Conclusion

The issues of teacher effectiveness are not new. They have been with us since the days of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. They must continue to attract our attention and pose difficult challenges in the spirit of endeavouring to enhance the quality of the education for our children.

The focus of this paper is to conceptualize the dimensions of teacher effectiveness. In doing this, an attempt was made to strive for balance and perspective in the approach used. For this purpose, three main inputs are used, namely:

- (i) past lessons, some of which are truly costly experiences in terms of time and finance;
- (ii) research findings spanning many years' efforts; and
- (iii) experience from actual practice of seasoned educators, trainers and teachers.

The orientation adopted whilst giving prominence to research is more practical with emphasis on the dimensions of teacher effectiveness, training programmes and their implementation.

The approach adopted rests on the simple expectation and demand of the members of the society at large that teacher training programmes must produce effective teachers.

Aspects of teacher effectiveness are found in all teacher training programmes. Often, they are implicitly woven into the training curriculum. A case is made for the dimensions of teacher effectiveness to be woven into the training curriculum more explicitly. They should be embodied in actual goals and objectives in the training curriculum. Concerted attempts must be made to translate them into training strategies which are effectively implemented. This approach will result in a sharper focus on issues of teacher effectiveness in teacher training programmes.

This call for a sharper focus on the dimensions of teacher effectiveness emanates from a feeling of uneasiness that too many trainees from teacher training programmes are not prepared appropriately and sufficiently to assume the mantle of teachers who are effective or who will continue to be effective. Our search and concern for quality education must find a meaningful starting point for positive action. It is our contention that training and sustaining effective teachers is one such possible beginning. This is because quality education and questions of teacher effectiveness are truly inseparable. Our society believes in this.



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